" Where there is no vision the people perish."

NOVEMBER 1925 DECEMBER

THE POETRY REVIEW

General Editor : Galloway Kyle, K.R.G.
Associate Editor, U.S.A. : Mrs. W. Hunt Bartlett.
New Verse Editor : Dr. O. C. de C. Ellis.

VOL. XVI CONTENTS No. 6

Spanish Poetry : V. Espronceda, III. By E. Crosby Heath	373
Czardas : Brahms. By G. Goodwin	391
Lèrmontov : His Poetry. By Dr. C. P. L. Dennis	392
Three Poets. By M. C. Lockhead	404
The Dynamics of American Poetry, XI : Emily Dickinson, Willa Siebert Cather, R. Hillyer	405
Steel Armour and Woven Threads. By Arthur Hood	415
Poetry and Science. By Alice Hunt Bartlett	419
Some Individual Anthologies	425
The Premium Editor's Report	429
Poetry Problem Papers : Key to the Browning Cross-Word Examination	435
Will-o-the-Wisp. By Elsa Kazi	439
The Poetry Society in India	440
Notes : Reports : Announcements	424, 433, 442, &c.
Poetry of To-Day : A New Book List	ix
New Premium Competitions : £32 for new poems	xi

All literary communications should be addressed to The Editor, The Poetry Review, Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1, and not to the Publishers. No MSS. can be considered or returned unless accompanied by stamped addressed envelope. The Editor accepts no responsibility for the safe custody or return of any MSS.

One Shilling and threepence net.

(Annual Postal Subscription, 7s. 6d. ; U.S.A. 2 Dollars)

The Journal of the Poetry Society (Incorporated) and a magazine of general poetic interest published bi-monthly for the Poetry Society (Incorporated) by

ERSKINE MACDONALD, LTD. : LONDON, W.C.1,

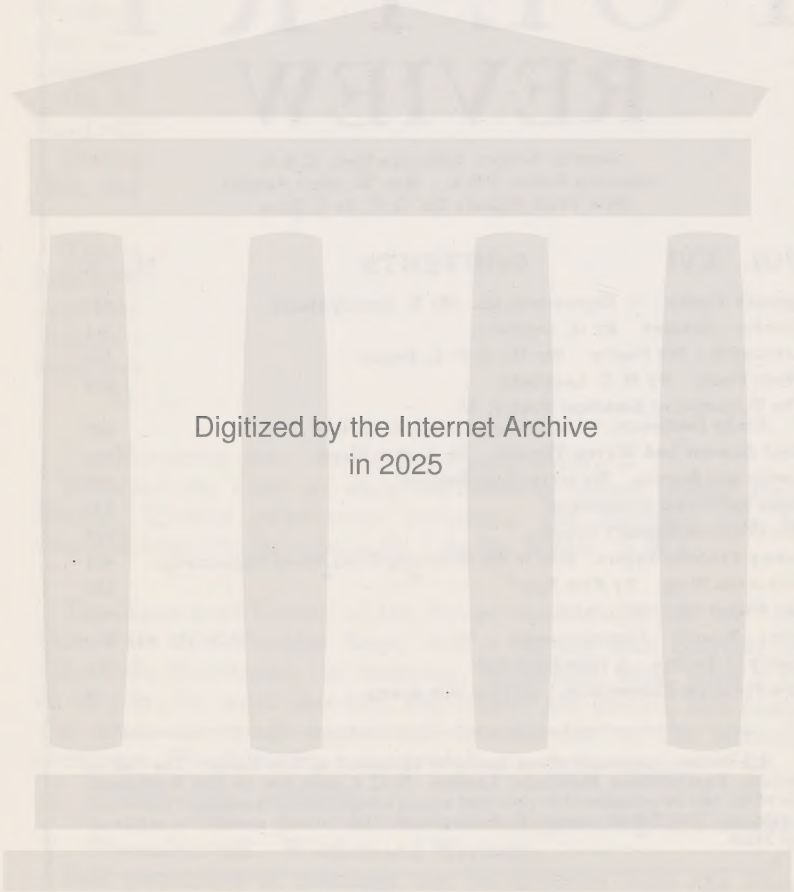
to whom all Annual Postal Subs. should be sent.

Poetry Society subs. and communications must be addressed to the Secretary of the Society (for details of the Society see inside pages).

American Editorial Office : 299 Park Avenue, New York.

American Trade Agents : Brentanos, New York.

"The leading poetry magazine of the world . . . of international eminence."—LITERARY DIGEST



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/poetry-review_november-december-1925_16_6

ESPRONCEDA. III.

IT is difficult to give an exact translation of *El diablo mundo.* "This devil of a world," or "This damned world"—using "damned" in the colloquial sense—conveys approximately the meaning of the original. The title does not embody the idea of the poem, even in the Spanish. It is arresting, however, and we must find out for ourselves its connection with the plan of this stupendous work. It is stupendous, for the subject is nothing less than a new creation, a new Adam, and a new progress of man through life. It begins with an Introduction; followed by six cantos of which the second is the famous *Canto á Teresa.* Canto V. is in two acts and three scenes, and is written in the dramatic form. The rest of the poem consists of stanzas of varying rhythms, largely the *ottava rima* so popular at the time, and is adorned with beautiful lyrics, amongst which are the lovely Song of Death and the magnificent Hymn to Immortality.

The Introduction opens with a striking Chorus of Demons:

Let us row, let us row!
Speed the boat onward;
Let it pierce through the cloud,
Let it pierce through the mist,
Through the ether, through flame,
Through night's inky pall
And the wide ocean's waves.

Let us row, let us cross
Every land, every sea;
To-day we have broken the prison of evil,
At last all the demons are free;
And to loud music's ringing
The damned make a revel,
With drinking and singing,
An orgy of devilish glee.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

The poet, lost in meditation during the silent hours of night, is roused by a mysterious sound, faintly heard:

What sound is this,
From what far hill,
That the hush
Of the still
Dark night pierces with its rush ?

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

He compares the noise to the galloping of a horse, to the roaring of wild beasts, to thunder, to the angry sea :

Dim the sky
With veils of mist
Where the wandering
Spirits fly ;
Here and there
Moves their flight,
They pierce the wind,
Thin as air,
Infinite.

Here they turn
There they swirl,
They come together,
Away they whirl.
Now they hide,
Now they peep,
They rush, they roam,
They pass, they play,
Back they sweep,
Grow, shrink away,
Vanish from sight.
Their hues glow bright,
And in shadow
And fitful gleam
Now they seem
Scattered and lost.
Now in terror
Of me, they quail,
Now in fury
They me assail,
In airy dances
They prevail.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

The wild swarm of phantoms, mounted on goats, on snakes, on ravens, on broomsticks, fly away. The confused and muffled sounds that perplex the poet resolve themselves into a chorus of voices, into which, at intervals, a single voice breaks. A choir sings :

There goes the ship,
Who knows to what sea ?
Who trusts wind and wave
Unhappy is he.

A voice replies :

What matter ? She follows
Her destiny,
Who ever can alter
Fate's decree ?
Thither she goes ;
Row without fear,
Whether rocked by soft breezes,
Or the North-wind drear.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

Other voices sing of glory, of riches, of power, of pleasure, of arrogance, of misfortune ; of mists, darkness, obscurity, chains ; of endless journeying on a road that has neither beginning nor end.

All these sounds, all these voices, are the passions of the world, the conflicting interests of man, the vices and the virtues—a pageant of the universe.

The bewildered poet pours out his doubts, his dismay, his hopes, his fears, in an attempt to solve the mystery of God in the world. He is still perplexed, the riddle is still unsolved when morning breaks.

But now the first translucent ray
Of rosy light illumes the dawn,
And o'er the splendour of the day
Nature her misty veil has drawn,
Painted with rainbow colours gay.

Now peace doth all the world surround ;
With gentle harmonies enwrought,
A murmur indistinct is caught
That in a revery profound
Suspended lulls all mortal thought.

Can all be true that meets my eyes ?
Was I awake, or did a vision
From mad delirium falsely rise ?
Does truth forsake me in derision ?
Is all that I perceive but lies ?

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

Here the Introduction, or Prologue, ends, and the poem begins.

Canto I.—An old man is seated in a room "neither luxurious nor mean," reading by the dim light of a lamp. A neighbouring clock strikes the hour of midnight. He closes his book, and listens to the relentless strokes. From his dry eyes presently falls a tear that burns like fire. His thoughts fling themselves into other spheres.

All the joy of youth is gone forever. The music and melody of the soul, the dreams of purity and rapture, the hours of serene happiness—all pass, and Death advances with giant strides, Death, the only future, the only hope.

What is man ? A mystery. What is life ? A mystery, too. Years fly ; old age draws near ; the present is a transient dream ; what has been, is an idle tale. Only Death is sure. Centuries trample upon centuries, man succeeds man, and the story of man and his madness is a narrow and noisome grave.

Oh, if one might attain eternal youth, eternal life. . . .

The old man falls asleep. A thousand visions float round his enchanted couch. Great squadrons from other worlds appear to him, and from a deep abyss, shrouded in dense darkness, where reigns a silence that nothing disturbs, a vaporous shade, a form vaguely outlined, the semblance of a beautiful woman, rises. He catches the languid harmonies of faint, sweet music, and then a voice which his ear hears not, which is only audible to his heart, sings :

Frail mortal, have no fear of me,
Fear not my name, my sombre guise,
For deep within my breast there lies
The end of man's adversity.
I, the compassionate, bestow
Far from the world a refuge sure

Where in my brooding shade secure
He sleeps in peace eternally.

I am the isle of sweet repose
That in the midst of life is set;
In me tired mariners forget
Their battles with tempestuous seas;
Where still, unrippling waters sleep,
In dreamless rest the weary lie,
Lulled by the soothing lullaby
Of a caressing, noiseless breeze.

I am the willow by the stream,
The verdure of my drooping boughs
I bend upon the furrowed brows
Of those who grief's stigmata bear;
I hush them into slumber, bathed
With dew from my refreshing springs,
While dark oblivion spreads her wings
And covers all their pain and care.

I am the virgin, strange and cold,
The last love for which any sighs;
No thorn nor any colour lies
In the flowers with which my bed is strown;
Of tenderness I make no boast,
Nor do I any heart deceive,
Though joy nor pleasure they receive
Eternal love I give my own.

. . . .

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

The pale and loving figure holds out her arms to the old man. He feels the blood thicken in his veins; his limbs grow cold; a delicious languor enwraps him. . . . Suddenly an immense glory, like molten gold, opens before him. His senses return, and he beholds a majestic goddess, her brow encircled with suns like a diadem, whose rays envelop her in a translucent veil. She seems to enshrine eternal love, inaccessible glories, crowns of gold and of laurel, triumphs, pleasures, splendours, victories, dreams, riches and power. In her are seen eternal life, eternal

activity, the dreams of the poet, the soft echo of the first sigh, the sweet plaint of the first love, the face of the calm night, the voice of the melancholy lute. The utmost that imagination can reach, all that the wildest longing creates, all that hope makes dear in advance—all these the marvellous vision scatters with a prodigal hand. Through all the glowing resplendence, the voices of a thousand seraphs rend the air, and there emerges one voice like a gust of wind which sings a hymn to Immortality :

All hail ! creative flame of energy,
Eternal wisdom's burning word of power ;
Pure source of all things ; fecund potency
Who makest death before thy feet to cower.

Insensate matter thou dost vivify,
Its atoms mingle at thy high command,
And clods of earth that without structure lie
Take form and multiply beneath thy hand.

Death to destroy thy labours seeks in vain,
All his brief triumph fails before thy might ;
From his vast ruins thou dost raise again
New forms, victoriously, before his sight.

By thee the sun's tremendous fire is fed,
From thee the sky receives its robe of blue,
Thy silver gleam upon the moon is shed,
Thou giv'st the early dawn its radiant hue.

Thou on the woods their echoes dost bestow,
Their leafy verdure on the tender trees,
Thy songs within the mournful rivers flow,
And thy vehement cries upon the seas.

Thou art the fragrance to the flower that clings,
Thou art the breath of love within the vale,
Thine is the murmur of the zephyr's wings,
Thy voice resounds within the furious gale.

Thou scatt'rest gold upon earth's borders wide,
In streams of molten metal doth it sweep ;

Thine is the lustre that the pearl doth hide
In the profound abysses of the deep.

Upon the wild and lurid clouds there lies
Thine inky mantle that the north-wind shakes;
With thy breath's flame thou dost light up the skies,
Before thy roaring man in terror quakes.

Of life thou art the seed, pure, germinal;
The flowing, everlasting spring of truth;
Light art thou, that from God's own light doth fall,
The essence of thy being, beauty and youth.

Thou art the force mysterious that impels
The earth around its axis; in thy face
The music of the spheres harmonious dwells,
Filling the bright worlds in celestial space.

The ages that perpetually roll
Are the artificers of thy design;
They chisel man's indomitable soul,
And make life's prison lovely as a shrine.

Thou with the whirlwind's violence dost force
The ages onward, and they disappear,
And hurrying to begin their rapid course
New centuries, impetuous, draw near.

And countless other ages forward press,
Appearing, disappearing without end;
At the eternal task with eagerness
They toil, nor e'er their tireless zeal suspend.

And ever their increasing labour grows
In thy great workshop without pause or stay;
On the rough matter fall their mighty blows,
Their energy redoubles day by day.

Upon the restless waves of life's great sea
Man drifts continually to and fro,
And thine immortal hand abundantly
Creative power doth in his being sow.

Frail man, lift up thy drooping head forlorn,
Thy thirst at the eternal springs assuage;
Thou, like the sun, shalt rise with every morn,
Immortal like the world, from age to age.
(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

The old man's pulse quickens; his heart beats with renewed strength; he feels the energy of youth in his limbs; the golden glory inundates his whole being. And now Immortality herself comes towards him on waves of burning wind, and her attendant troop of angels pour new life into his aged frame. His wrinkles vanish, his white hair becomes black once more, and eternity feeds the flame that is kindled afresh in his breast. The goddess clasps him in her arms, enfolding him in her glowing veil of life. Then follows a solemn prophecy. The voice which had sung the Hymn to Immortality now sings a hymn to the old man. He will trample upon the ages to come, says the voice; he will see man after man vanish; the sun that shines upon him now will still illumine his brow when centuries have gone by; dark winter, flowering April, sharp cold, summer warmth—all will pass, and he will still live; year after year, century after century he will see, and he will never come to the end of anything. But, says the voice, if one day he should weep in loneliness, if he should curse his eternal existence, then shall he remember that the choice was his own. He has asked for immortality, and the world will give him all it possesses, the world will be his, and it is already preparing to give him all it contains.

The ominous choice is made. The old man relinquishes the peace of the grave, and chooses the mystery of immortality.

Some beautiful stanzas follow, reflections of the poet upon life, which bring us to the magnificent *Canto á Teresa*, Canto II. of the poem. This canto is an interpolation. In a touching note, Espronceda says: "This canto is torn from my heart. Those who do not wish to read it may pass it over without scruple, for it has no connection with the rest of the poem."

Translations have been made of this canto, but no translation can reproduce its grief, its tenderness, its remorse, its beauty. Nothing more poignant, more passionate is to be found in the whole range of romantic poetry.

I leave its perfection untouched and pass on to

Canto III.—Here the drama begins. It is to be remembered that the goddess has bestowed physical immortality upon the aged man, who is now appropriately called Adam and who has become a youth of twenty, with the capacities of that age, but with memory completely blotted out. All the experiences of his long life, all his abstruse knowledge, no longer exist for him.

Adam, thrust into a new existence full of youthful energy, with the physical beauty of a Greek statue, is intoxicated with life. He rushes, naked, into the street, and is, naturally, taken into custody. This canto is worked out with Rabelaisian humour.

"I should like to say, reader" (Espronceda observes, in some brilliant stanzas), "that this second Adam spent his first day, not in the fields or woods of another Eden, but in a dark and gloomy prison, by reason of the sin which he had committed upon his entrance into the world."

Canto IV.—In the prison where Adam is incarcerated in punishment of his unconscious wrong-doing, there chances to be a well-known criminal, serving a sentence—an old man familiarly called Uncle Lucas. There was no prison in Spain that did not hold memories of him, no town that had not borne witness to his rascalities, no road without proofs of his fame. A small man, narrow-shouldered and stooping, long-armed and bow-legged, with rough manners and of an evil mind.

This old scoundrel takes Adam under his protection. He has a sort of liking for the beautiful youth, and he decides to train him as an accomplice in his own criminal career. Uncle Lucas, through his varied experience, has reduced life to a series of maxims, which he flings out in disconnected sentences. They are in rhymed four line stanzas in the Spanish, and are written in thieves' jargon. I give

a prose version of some of them—they are gems of experience and wisdom which he offers to Adam.

. . . . .

For you, tomorrow; for me, to-day . . .
I'm the blade; you are the handle . . .
The world's a fandango.

. . . . .

Listen! Never trust anyone.
Lie low, my son; suspect everyone.
Never let anyone know what you are thinking.

. . . . .

If you pink anyone,
Finish him off;
Don't give him the chance of vengeance;
Dead men tell no tales.

. . . . .

Women—the best of them
Is a bad lot.
The devil has no surer bait,
Nor one more deadly.

. . . . .

Bad seed, bad harvest—
What do I care . . .
The more you look the less you see.

. . . . .

The proverb says, my son,
That God is governor,
And money is his deputy—
Well, without money you can do nothing.

. . . . .

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

Adam understands nothing of old Lucas's views, but he listens attentively. He does not yet know good from evil, virtue from vice. There is, however, a reason for his interest in the convict. Old Lucas has a daughter, young and beautiful, who comes to the prison to visit him. Instinct draws Salada and Adam together. "She was all heart, and soul and life, and grace," says Espronceda, . . . "a woman created to suffer, branded as vile by a vile world; a child of crime with only her own experience and pride

to help her in her struggle with the world." She has no tie, no counsellor, no one but the criminal old man who spends his life in prisons.

A year passes, and Adam, who has been educated and taught the necessity of adequate clothing, is set at liberty. He goes to live with Salada in the poor mean house where she lives her vile life, but which his innocence and love transforms to a paradise. It is incidentally a den of thieves, and the retreat of old Lucas during his brief intervals of freedom. Adam understands nothing of all this. Salada is his Eve, the first woman in his new life. She satisfies and dominates him for the moment.

Canto V.—The first act of this canto opens in a low tavern, where Adam and Salada, seated at a table, watch a group of rough-looking men who are whispering together, and listen to the strains of the guitar which a short, slouching, red-haired man of some forty years of age is playing, and to whose music a number of young men and women of the lower class are dancing. This man is a friar whose soutane covers a vile heart. Espronceda sees fit to apologise for introducing this character, who, he assures his readers, is not representative of the Spanish clergy. This character reminds one of the Friar or the Pardoner in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

This low company is Salada's world. The women sneer at her absorption in a new lover. The men, whom Adam has replaced, treat her with vulgar familiarity. He resents, he scarcely knows why, the attitude of these ruffians towards the woman he loves. His knowledge of decency and honour is gone, but sub-conscious memories are imperishable, and influence him in spite of himself. He grows more and more restless and disturbed, and finally pushes one of the men off with violence. This is the signal for a general confusion, and the man he has so roughly rebuked for his insulting behaviour draws his knife and flourishes it in Salada's face. Salada, in a sudden rage, stabs him. He falls, and everyone rushes out. "What have you done?" Adam cries. "I don't know," Salada answers. They hurry away through a back door,

leaving the wounded man and the distracted tavern keeper to the mercies of the police, who enter, followed by the usual crowd.

The first scene of the second act is in Salada's house, to which she and Adam have returned. I give a rhymed translation, following the original as closely as possible, of the opening lines. This is one of the examples of a single rhyme running through pages—a feat only possible where assonance is employed. As assonance *is* rhyme, in Spanish, I have reproduced the rhymes in their place, but it has been necessary to vary them :

SALADA : And haven't you a kiss, my dear,
For the poor girl who loves you so ?

ADAM : Why did you stab that fellow ? Speak !

SALADA : Why ? From my father well I know
Many a time I've heard him say,
To win a fight one must strike the first blow.

ADAM : Why is it that I cannot bear
To see blood-stained those hands of snow ?
They are so pretty ! To carry flowers
They were made, and not a dagger to show.

SALADA : Oh ! if you think that, so let it be.
I'll never touch a knife, no, no !
I shan't mind being killed for you.

ADAM : How lovely she is !

SALADA : Ah ! you don't know,
My Adam, how I worship you.
Why, to your eyes that shine and glow,
Like a rash moth I long to fly
And scorch my wings, and perish so.
Rest, dearest, rest here in my arms,
Like this. Are you happy ? Tell me, sweet,
Whose is your heart ? Isn't it true
That for me only is each beat ?
Kiss me again. What ails you, then ?
Don't you hear me ?

ADAM (*to himself*) : Why are some men born
Like us, who are poor and low, and some
To high estate, rich, full of scorn ?

SALADA : What are you saying ?

ADAM : You have seen
These rich ones, noblemen so fine,
Upon their powerful horses set,
Whose trappings with bright metal shine,
Ride, or in splendid carriages
In a luxurious ease recline
And scarce a passing glance bestow
In their insulting arrogance
On those who cross like you and I
The roads on foot, submissively ;
'Twas only yesterday to explain
This world which so bewilders me
You tried, but tried, alas ! in vain.
Tell me, those ladies I have seen
In robes and jewels of colours gay—
Do they live like us, and speak like us ?
What do they do the livelong day ?

SALADA : My dear, we are children, every one
Of the same Father, they and we,
And the best of them is just as good
As I, and no better !

ADAM : You spoke to me
Of a common father of us all
Yesterday.

SALADA : They are made, you see,
Of flesh and blood, and born, like us.

ADAM : Oh ! it is useless that I should be
Worn out with idle questionings !
You can't quiet my perplexity
Nor can I make you understand.
But you can tell me this, at least—
What are their pastimes like ? Their balls ?
Their lives, their joys ; how do they feast ?
What are their houses like ? And how
Could I with them associate,
How could I live and speak with them,
And in their pomp and high estate
Their equals be in luxury ?

SALADA : Do you remember the goldfish bright
That in its crystal globe swims round,
Enchanted with the sun's strange light
That into rainbow colours breaks ;

Hearing the breezes as they dance
So gaily through the scented flowers,
And by the music thrown in a trance
Longs to break through its prison walls
So it may join by some good chance
The light, the flowers and the breeze ?
God help the wretched little fish
If it should manage to escape,
For if it got its foolish wish
And plunged in a foreign element,
The light, the flowers and the wind
Would kill it in a minute's space.
Adam, the thoughts that vex your mind
Are nothing more than passing dreams ;
You try to clasp the empty air,
For dreams are air and nothing more.
As for your haughty nobles there—
Many more highly placed than us
Only contempt and scorn obtain
From these great lords, for all their toils.
They are our enemies, these vain
And proud aristocrats, and we
Do well to pay them back again
In their own coin ! That's the only way !
And I think . . . but no, I'll think no more
About them. There's no place, I'm sure,
Nor thoughts of any love but mine
In your true heart. . . . And yet . . . and yet . . .
Perhaps . . . those ladies, rich and fine,
Decked out in frills and furbelows . . .
If you were mad enough to forget
My love. . . . Adam, you do not know
What a woman's like, on vengeance set,
Nor how far an angry woman will go.

. . . .

ADAM (*still musing*) : It may be as you say, but why
May finery that the eye can see
And riches that the hand can touch
Never in my possession be ?

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

Salada soothes him and he falls asleep. When he wakes he tells Salada the dream he has had. He has found

himself one with the great of the earth. He has galloped on a swift horse, gold has been his, and he has possessed the beautiful women he has seen and desired. All that he has longed for has been bestowed upon him. And in this dream Salada has had no part. He tells her, naively, that he does not know what became of her in the vision. She foresees the future. She realises that she has lost Adam, and in a touching plea she recalls her low birth, her evil life, her utter unworthiness. She begs Adam not to forsake her; she offers to be his servant, only asking to fulfil the most menial tasks for him. Adam, not in the least understanding himself, and easily moved, like a child, falls again into the glowing imagery of his dream and promises to take her with him to the enchanted regions of his fancy.

In the second scene of this act they are joined by the friar, who brings the news that the man Salada stabbed is not mortally wounded, and is recovering. His manner, his loose talk, offend not only Adam but Salada, who through suffering and love is being purified in spirit.

Six men, of forbidding aspect, now enter. They are a gang of thieves, come to their meeting place, as is their habit, in Salada's house. It appears that old Lucas has warmly recommended Adam to these robbers, as a valuable accomplice. They have planned a robbery for that night, and they expect Adam to join them. He listens eagerly to the details which the friar gives. The Countess of Alcira, whose house they mean to break into, is young, rich, beautiful. She lives in a palace, which is a treasure-house of gold and jewels. Salada watches his eagerness with unconcealed anxiety. She redoubles her caresses and entreaties, and flinging her arms round him implores him not to leave her. For the first time her endearments annoy Adam. He pushes her aside, and goes out with the robbers.

Canto VI.—This canto opens with a glowing description of the house where the robbery is to take place, and of the beautiful Countess, its mistress. Here the "gorgeousness" of Spanish verse has free play.

The thieves, accompanied by Adam, enter the house, where all the gold and silver, jewels and laces are strewn about the rooms—a delightful sight for thieving eyes. The rough men, daggers in hand, go into the lady's bedroom, where in all her youth and beauty she is sleeping—"like a dormouse," says one of the gang. Adam gazes, entranced, upon the beautiful creature. He entirely forgets Salada. After all, the virtue of fidelity is acquired, not inherent, and the recently re-created Adam has, as yet, developed very little knowledge of the world. In Salada's poor home he has lived, a contented prisoner, like the goldfish in its globe. He has seen only mean and tawdry furnishings, and the pictures, the gold and velvet chairs, the ivory tables, all the rich ornaments of a rich house, delight him. Attracted by a splendid clock, he touches it in such a way that a musical chime sounds. At the unexpected noise breaking the stillness, all eyes are turned upon the culprit, who is innocently unconscious of wrongdoing. "Stab the fellow!" cries one of the robbers. "Damn the hour that this fool came with us!" says another.

The uproar wakes the Countess. The men tie a handkerchief over her mouth to stifle her cries. This arouses Adam's rage. He draws his knife and strikes out right and life. A struggle ensues; the cries of those who are stabbed bring the police to the scene. "The police!" they cry, and without further ado they make their escape. Adam, at that dire cry, remembering that it was the police who thrust him into prison upon his first entry into the world, leaps from a balcony, and runs for his life.

Presently, feeling secure from arrest, he walks more quietly, and comes to a house where, through an open window, he sees a bier, with wax tapers at the head, on which lies the lifeless figure of a young girl. An old woman, weeping, watches over the corpse.

Adam is distressed by the sight of her grief. He gains admittance, and joins his tears with those of the old woman. He learns that the girl is her daughter, dead in her sixteenth year.

"Good mother," he says, "I am as yet new to the world. I do not know what death is. Is it impossible to find life and bring it to her again? I can blow out that taper, but if I put it to another light it will flame up again. Is there no light which can rekindle the flame which burned in the life of this child?"

His mind reverts to the treasures of the house from which he has just fled. He sees no reason why he may not take any gold he can seize, and he continues, with earnest and touching ignorance:

"Ah! with money perhaps it can be bought. You are feeble and afflicted; the years have consumed your strength, and the elixir of life is perhaps to be found far from here. Tell me where it is hid, and I will fly there. I will plunder the world, and I will buy life! You shall see the quenched light rekindle, and I will wipe away those tears when I have brought back the child who is so dear to you."

The old woman explains to him that she would have fulfilled any task, committed any crime, to bring back life to her dead child. Her loss is irreparable; "God gave her to me, and God has taken her away. His will must be done."

Adam, still groping in his pitiful ignorance, suggests another avenue of hope.

> Unhappy mother, with your streaming grey
> Hair, all unbound, and eyes with grieving blind,
> The lamentable prey
> Of sorrow, with disconsolate heart and mind,
> Kneel to that God who has taken your child away.
> Ah! could He see you as I do, bending low,
> And mark the rivers of tears that flow,
> Could He hear the dirge your heavy heart-beats trace
> Within your sad and desolated breast;
> If He could see upon that wrinkled face
> The deep emotion indelibly imprest
> That in your soul has made its dwelling-place;
> If He could see you as I do . . . upon this flower
> That a poisoned wind has withered suddenly,
> Surely He would again bestow the dower
> Of colour and fragrance and freshness! Come with me,

Oh! come, and let me your affliction share.
Let us tell our grief together at His feet;
We shall find shelter in His loving care.
To waters pure and clean
Let us fly, of endless life the endless source,
And the rich seed that is hidden in their course
Together we will glean!
Dry then the tears, poor woman, that flow in vain,
Let hope revive and a new courage bring;
Show all your woe, uncover all your pain
To that great God. With a humble prayer draw nigh,
And to His mercy cling,
He will behold your tears and hear your cry.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

These lines, so Spanish, so Catholic, virtually end the canto the last that Espronceda wrote. Some fifty ensuing lines of the poet's comments and reflections are negligible. Heart and brain were exhausted, and nothing more of any importance came from his pen.

The poem remains a titanic fragment. Had Espronceda a plan, or was he obsessed by a theme too vast for mortal grasp?

Very little can be elucidated from these six cantos. Is there a meaning in the curious fact that the new Adam learned the love of man for woman, and woman for man, from Salada, a courtesan; and the love of a mother for her child from a woman of evil occupation, in whose infamous house debauchery and death reign in adjoining rooms?

Salada's vengeance for Adam's desertion is clearly foreshadowed. What dagger was she to find sharp enough to pierce an immortal breast?

Old Lucas, who is so minutely drawn, must have been destined for further activity, and the lovely Countess was surely to have led Adam into that world of riches and luxury for which he longed.

One cannot doubt that one day, bruised, bleeding, broken, disillusioned, he was to curse the immortality he had brought upon himself.

Was the gift to be withdrawn? Was redemption to come? Was Salada, purified by suffering, to save him, as

Gretchen saved Faust, as Doña Inés saved Don Juan Tenorio ?

Speculation is idle. What does it matter ? A great poet conceived a sublime drama, cut short by his untimely death. Whatever its faults, its shortcomings, it enshrines three of the noblest lyrics in the Spanish language. Let us leave it there, and pay homage to the man who bequeathed these treasures to his country.

ELLA CROSBY-HEATH.

[The " Spanish Poetry " articles will be resumed in the May issue.]

CZARDAS : BRAHMS

THE music throbs like hooves of many steeds
Upon a sweep of stubbled wilderness.
Rushing it comes in breathless savagery,
Leaping and pulsing ever, ever on.
Big with the soul-cry of the gipsy blood,
Fierce as the passion-fire that lurks within
Nomadic eyes.

. . . . .

A sudden weariness, as when the wind
Dies to a timid breeze from stormy wrath.
A vision swift
Of strange, wild girls with blood-red mouths that call
For kisses, hot and panting as the South,
And tiny, supple waists and dreamy eyes
That hold the mystery of those long-lost tribes
Who loved and fought, despaired and found life fair.

. . . . .

Then on again in whirling, maddening speed.
Forget ! forget ! life is but one long tune,
And we the notes upon the bars of Time.
Though Love be tragedy the world moves on,
Till on a crashing, quivering chord we reach
Finality.

GWENDOLINE GOODWIN.

MIKHÁYL YÚR'EVICH LÉRMONTOV:
A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND POETRY

II. HIS POETRY

THE works of Lérmontov form a considerable body of writing, especially when one recollects that he was only 27 at his death : they include poems of different categories, epic, lyric, and dramatic, and also prose works. Throughout the whole collection of Lérmontov's writings his own personality is the dominant factor. We can see his mind passing from the pessimism of *A Monologue* (1829)—

" Believe me, insignificance is a blessing in this world ! . . . To what purpose are deep knowledge, thirst of glory, talent, and ardent love of freedom—when we cannot make use of them ? We, the children of the north, like the native plants, are not long in flower, quickly wither. . . . Like the winter sun on the grey horizon, so our life is gloomy, so its monotonous flow is not long . . . and it seems stifling in our native land, and heavy is our heart, and our soul yearns. Not knowing love, nor sweet friendship, our youth is fretted away amid empty storms and quickly the poison of malice darkens it, and the cup of life grown cold is bitter to our taste, and nothing any longer cheers our souls "—

through the exaltations of *Mtsíri* and *Démon* to the calm repose of *I Go Out Alone* (1841)—just as Milton passed from the somewhat affected passions of his youth through *Paradise Lost* to a peaceful conclusion in *Samson Agonistes*—and it is considered by some that, had Lérmontov lived, he would have developed yet further in serenity and self-consolation.

There is not space to go into all his works in detail : we propose, therefore, to pass by his dramas and his prose, although *A Hero of our Time* is a work of high importance in many ways, and to take just the three most important

longer poems, *Démon*, *Mtsíri*, *Lay of the Tsar' Iván Vasíl'evich* . . ., and the most outstanding features of the lyrics. Of these, *Démon*, which took twelve years to write, and which was never really finished, holds the chief place.

The story of this poem is simple. Démon, the " spirit of exile," flies over earth, meditating on his past life, on the happy time before his fall, and of his wearisome fate : beneath him lies the Caucasus, whose peaks glitter with eternal snow, encircling the luxurious plains of Georgia : but the beauties of Nature stir not the spirit's emotions :

" And over the peaks of the Caucasus flew the exile of Paradise. Beneath him shone, like the flashing facets of a diamond, Kazbék clothed in eternal snows. And deep below, darkling as a cleft, as a serpent's lair, wandered winding Daryál. And Térek, bounding like a shaggy-crested lion, roared : the wild beasts of the mountains and the eagle hovering in the azure depth hearkened to the waters' word. And golden clouds accompanied his flight from the southern regions, from far to the north. And the close-packed throng of crags, full of mysterious drowsiness, bent their heads over him, watching the glittering waves. Castle-towers on the crags frowned grimly through the mists ; on guard at the Caucasian gates stood giant guardians. Wild and wonderful all around was God's world, but the proud spirit took in with a disdainful glance the creation of his God, and on his lofty brow was reflected naught.

" And before him the living beauties of another picture unfolded : the vales of luxuriant Georgia, spread like a carpet afar. O happy, O resplendent region of earth ! There are towering ruins and brooks that loudly prattle o'er their beds of many-coloured pebbles ; bowers of roses, where nightingales sing of beauteous maidens mild, in the sweet voice of their loving ; branchy shade of plane-trees twined with ivy close ; groves, where in the hot day hide the timid deer ; splendour and life ; murmur of the leaves, and utterance of low varied voices ; exhalation of a thousand flowers ; the voluptuous heat of noon and nights alway

bathed in fragrant dew and hung with stars lustrous as eyes, as the glance of a Georgian damsel.

" But, save envy chill, the splendour of nature awoke in the breast of the ghostly exile no new emotions, no new powers ; and all that he saw before him he or scorned or hated."

In the high castle of King Gudál the banquet is spread, the marriage feast of his daughter Tamára, a maiden fairer than all maidens upon earth since Paradise was lost ; she dances to please the guests, dances for the last time (but the secret doubt darkens her features, yet only to make them more beauteous), in all her movements graceful, full of expression, of delightful simplicity, so that if Démon were to see her, recalling his one-time brethren, he would have turned away and sighed. . . .

" And Démon saw. . . ." And straightway he was fulfilled with a transport of joy and hope : again he attained the ecstasy of happiness that once had been his.

The young prince, the ruler of Sinodál, hastes to the bridal at the head of a rich caravan of gifts : in his urgency, and betrayed by Démon, he omits to pray by a wayside shrine. The caravan is attacked by brigands, and only the faithful steed escapes, bearing his dead master to the castle of Gudál : whereupon their joy is turned to bitter grief.

In tears Tamára flings herself upon her bed :

> And lo ! it seems as though above her
> A voice enchanting she doth hear.

" Do not bewail," it says, " thy beloved is in the gardens of heaven : he hath no need of thy grief : I will comfort thee with golden dreams."

> O'er the aerial ocean sailing,
> With nor sails nor helm to guide,
> Calmly through the haze's veiling
> Ordered quires of stars do glide.
> 'Mid the tracts thine eye can grasp not,
> Moving traceless through the sky,
> Of the clouds that thou canst clasp not

Float the fleecy flocks on high.
Hour of parting, hour of trysting
To them joy or grief ne'er bring:
For the future they've no listing,
For the past no sorrowing.
But to think of them is needful
In misfortune's weary day,
Be of earthly things unheedful,
And be carefree, e'en as they!

At length Tamára falls asleep, and sees in a vision a stranger of unearthly beauty, whose glance was full of sad love. It was not an angel, it was not Hell's lord:

'Twas like unto the lambent even,
Nor day nor night, nor dark nor light.

Overcome by grief, Tamára seeks refuge in a convent, but the mysterious figure yet troubles her slumbers: it is Démon hovering about her in indecision. One night he desires to depart thence; but the sound of a song recalls him:

A marvel! From the long dry eyes
A heavy tear doth downward roll.

The evil spirit penetrates into Tamára's cell, and easily overcomes her guardian cherubim.

"Who art thou?" asks Tamára.

"I am he whom none love: but I am thy lover."

"Why lovest thou me?"

"I know not; but I love thee with a love undying; from time's beginning thy image has been graven on my heart: the passions of mankind are transitory; mine perdurable."

"I yield; but renounce thy evil ways!"

"I swear it, only hear my love!"

Tamára dies in the ecstasy of her sacrifice: her ashes are sepultured beneath a high mountain: her soul is saved by her angel and borne to heaven. Démon, vanquished, wanders again in the outer darkness.

And thereon Démon, vanquishèd, did curse
His visions that of frenzy were fulfilled,

And he anew abode alone and proud,
Alone amid the universe entire,
Without or hope or love him to inspire.

Although *Démon* suffers from defects of plot—*e.g.*, the preponderating figure of the hero (in some degree a reflexion of Lérmontov himself), the proportionate weakness of Tamára, the improbability of the conflict with, and the easy victory over, the guardian angel, the somewhat inconsistent character of Démon, and the awkward solution of the plot, as well as from occasional exaggeration and false rhetoric: yet, by the majesty of the language, by the profusion and lavishness of ornament, the sonority of the versification (the metre is, technically speaking, iambic dimeter—*i.e.*, four feet having the stress on the even syllables—and there is great latitude in the use of feminine endings; but mere technical description cannot convey an adequate idea of the harmonious ebb and flow of the metric and rhythmic movements, or of the skilful manner in which the rhyme-schemes reflect the development and break up the general current like eddies in a fast-rushing stream); by the richness, luxury, and variety of the pageantry of the poem—first the frowning heights, then the smiling plain, from whence we enter the fenced tower, and so onward; by the Oriental pomp and display, by the exquisite beauty of the descriptions of natural lovelinesses, a thing especially appealing to English students (it is a joy to find in Russian poetry that which one seems to miss somewhat in Latin and Greek literature—namely, the realisation of the fact that this world has its own beauty apart from its inhabitants, and that sympathetic understanding is all that is necessary to unveil it); by the fascination emanating from the proud and disdainful—but what secret sorrow and suffering of soul does not this outward contempt cover?—"spirit of exile," which bewitches us almost as much as it enchanted Tamára; by the compelling vehemence of expression of passion (the dialogue between Tamára and Démon is too long to quote in full, and excerpts cannot do it justice: but nevertheless it is a triumph of poetic feeling and power): by all these

beauties the poem has captivated generation upon generation of readers and lovers of poesy, and, ever renewing the magical warp and woof of its broidered spell, will surely continue to enchain men's hearts, leading them willingly to reverence the genius of the poet thereof, who, like Keats, cut off untimely, was bereft of the harvest of the promise of his youth.

Mtsîri, or *The Novice*, is also a Caucasian legend, but of a less fabulous epoch than *Démon*. Its hero is a captive Georgian boy, whom a Russian general had left at a monastery at Mtskhet, as he had fallen sick; he was cherished by a monk, baptized, and intended to take the vows; but always he had longed to escape to his fatherland, of which he had tender recollections. One stormy night he flees, and for three days all search is in vain, but on the third day he is found unconscious on the hillside; he is brought back in a dying condition, and relates his adventures in his last confession. "I felt like a wild creature (says he) in my freedom; when the morning dawned I drank in with rapture the beauty of nature; at noon I grew thirsty, and went down to a stream to drink; I heard a Georgian girl coming to draw water—her song lingers yet in my ears; then I tried to win through the forest, but in vain; in agony I gnawed the earth; suddenly there appeared a panther, with whom I battled to the death; at the dawn of the third day I emerged from the forest, only to find my hopes cheated, and that I had returned to the house of my captivity; the heat of the day brought on delirium, wherein I dreamed that I was lying in a river, while a golden fish sang lullaby; then was I found: alas! for my unfulfilled desires! But let my dying eyes look their last upon the mountains, that I may pass away, not cursing anyone."

The poem suffers from similar defects to those by which *Démon* is blemished—*i.e.*, a somewhat improbable *mise en scène* and a far-fetched plot; and the harsh self-righteousness of the Novice is unpleasing; there are also traces of romantic exaggeration—*e.g.*, in the description of the fight with the panther; but all these are pardonable in considera-

tion of the real beauty of the verse, the richness of the setting, and the fervent sympathy evoked for the home-sickness of the young hero. A word should also be added about the metre: it is unique in having no feminine rhymes, a thing unusual in Russian poetic composition (in which variety of rhyme is usually preferred to flexibility of rhythm), especially in the particular metre employed—the same metre as is found in Milton's *Il Penseroso*.

A very satisfying poem is the *Lay of Tsar' Iván Vasíl'evich, the Young Esquire, and the Doughty Merchant Kaláshnikov*, which is composed after the manner of the old folk-epics called *Bilíni*:

> Hail to thee, O thou Tsar' Iván Vasíl'evich,
> Of thee have we composèd our lay,
> And of thine esquire belovèd,
> Yea, and of the hardy merchant, of Kaláshnikov.
> We composèd it in the antique way,
> We sang it loud to the *Gúsli's* ring,
> We sang it at length, and adorned the tale.

Iván IV sitteth on his throne, and causeth wine to be drawn for his esquires*: they drink and glorify the Tsar': all save one whose mien is distrait, and whose head hangeth sorrowfully. "Why art thou so heavy with grief, my trusty esquire?"

"'Tis for love of a beauteous dame; in all thy realm is not her peer." But (O deceiver!) she is wedded to a young merchant according to the laws of our Christian faith.

Stepán Paramónovich, surnamed Kaláshnikov, hath closed his stall, and cometh to his high house, but findeth not his young wife therein; and suddenly she entereth pale, bareheaded. "Where hast thou diverted thyself with Boyars' sons? Truly I have need to immure thee in a close prison."

"I was returning early when the Tsar's esquire came upon me: my cheeks burn yet from his embraces; he tore away my veil. Whom have I but thee as my protector?"

---

* This is Iván the Terrible, and his "esquires" are the dreaded escort of *oprichniki*, warriors to whom naught was sacred.

Kaláshnikov seeketh his brothers' aid; he will challenge the ruffian Kiribêyevich to mortal combat by the Moskvá's banks: the brothers promise assistance. The lists are dressed, and Tsar' Iván sitteth to judge and his Boyars and esquires. Kiribêyevich challengeth and Kaláshnikov taketh it up, a deadly combat. They fight: and Kaláshnikov dealeth a blow to the temple, and so slayeth the esquire. "Tell me truly," saith the awful Tsar', "didst kill my esquire by accident or of set design?"

"Of set design: but why, I will tell to God alone."

"Rightly said: thy wife and thy children shall be fed from my treasury, thy kinsfolk shall trade freely throughout my domains; as for thee:

> On the mighty bell will I bid them toll,
> That all the Moscow folk may know,
> That thou, too, art not bereft of my clemency."

The scaffold is prepared; Stepán maketh the last farewells, and suffereth the punishment. He is buried where three roads meet, and his nameless tomb hath become a crossway shrine. . . .

> Up, ye lads of prowess glowing,
> Harpers young and knowing,
> Voices with song o'erflowing!
> Fairly ye began—now fairly make ye closing;
> To each due meed and honour disposing.
> To the generous boyar glory!
> To the beauteous boyárinya glory!
> And to all the Christian folk be glory!

The whole poem appeals to the imagination and fires the blood by its marvellously skilful reproduction of the spirit of the past, by the consummate artistry of the relation, the manner in which the characters live and move before us in all their primitive simplicity, with all their old-time crudity of passion—whether it be the Tsar' himself, ironic and stern, or Kiribêyevich, a bold and haughty knave, or Kaláshnikov, sincere, firm of purpose, and of stainless honour, and finally by the severe richness of the style, and

the rush of the free-rhythmed, rhymeless verses in which it is written.

Izmaíl Bey is the longest of Lérmontov's poems, but it is not thereby the greatest. Izmaíl was a Caucasian, who had been educated in St. Petersburg, and imbibed all the vices of the capital, and who found on his return that he could not appreciate the primitive liberty of the mountain life nor the love of a maiden of the wilds. In his disillusionment he gives his life in fighting against the forces of civilisation, but his people only despise him the more.

We should also mention in passing the remaining longer poems of lesser importance—*A Tale for Children*, considered by Gógol to be Lérmontov's chief work, but left unfinished (it is a poem of society life); *Hadjí-Abrék*, a work of immature years; *Sásha*, a (partly autobiographical) society tale in verse; *The Boyar Orsha*, a poem of serfage, of which large parts were later inserted into *Mtsíri*, and a bunch of dramas, mostly centring about one dominating character; of these *The Masked Ball* is perhaps the best. Nor must the prose work, *A Hero of Our Time*, be left altogether out of the account, as it is of importance in that it demonstrates that Lérmontov was as excellent a master of prose as of verse, and illustrates at greater length certain of his ideas of life and of mankind. But it is more particularly of Lérmontov the poet that we would treat.

IIA

Besides the longer poems there are extant a considerable number of lyrics and shorter pieces generally, which are of a great variety of theme, ranging from denunciations of his contemporaries, expression of his own general pessimism, narrative poems (*Tamára*, for example), polemics concerning Napoleon (*The Last Resting Place*), patriotic verse, of such different classes as *My Native Land* and *Borodinó*, to nature poetry, of which we have many fine examples, love poetry, elegies properly so called (*The Angel*, *On the Death of Púshkin*), elegies of contemplation (*I Go Out Alone*)—a species in which Lérmontov especially excels—religious verse, and finally translations from English and

German. Throughout all Lérmontov's best lyrics there run the same distinctive qualities: clarity of thought, beauty of setting, fervour of feeling, conciseness and precision of language, and, lastly, technical excellence of metre and rhyme, the secrets of which Lérmontov has fully mastered. If, as some say, genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains, then we have only to produce Lérmontov's notebooks and point to the numberless corrections and emendations found therein to substantiate our poet's claim; Lérmontov's poems are no shallow effusions, scribbled down at a moment's notice; they are the product of prolonged and profound meditation and attention, and, as is often the case, the results of such excogitation deceive us by their very mellifluousness and spontaneity into thinking that they are really and truly the fruit of the instant.

To an English reader, who can look back upon a long line of poets from Chaucer to Dr. Bridges, who have in every conceivable manner celebrated the natural beauties of our fair island, the beauty of Lérmontov's nature poetry is very striking; be it a simple description of natural effects as in *When Ripples the Yellowing Cornfield*, or a sympathizing of the moods of poet and nature as in *The Clouds*, or a personification of rivers and streams (*The Gifts of the Térek*)—which may tend also to the expression of patriotism (cf. *The Dispute*)—these lyrics of Lérmontov evoke a responsive chord in the appreciation of his English reader—at once alien and akin, if one regard his Scottish ancestry.

But it is, however, in the "elegy of contemplation" that Lérmontov's genius rises to its height.

"Où le poète me parait inimitable, c'est dans telles petites pièces faites d'une larme, chefs d'œuvre de tendresse brulante ou de mélancholie. Moins harmonieux et moins parfaits que les vers de Pouchkine, ceux de Lérmontof ont parfois des vibrations plus douloureuses.

"'Et j'en sais d'immortels qui sont de purs sanglots.'"*

* De Vogüé, *Le Roman Russe*, ch. i, sect. ii.

And de Vogüé cites in support of his point *We Have Parted*, which is indeed quite a little flower of verse:

"We have parted: but thy portrait I keep on my heart: like a pale phantom of better years it rejoices my soul.

"And although surrendered to new passions, I cannot fall out of love with it; so a deserted temple—is alway a temple; and the over-turned idol alway a god!"

Another great quality in Lérmontov's verse is the manner in which he succeeds in subduing the somewhat sibilant words of his native tongue so as to produce a fine effect of onomatopeia. The Russian language, generally speaking, does not lend itself to the subtler sort of onomatopeia; such verses as these (from Francis Thompson's *Ode to the Setting Sun*) would be hard to match in Russian:

> The wailful sweetness of the violin
> Floats down the hushed waters of the wind;
> The heart-strings of the sobbing harp begin
> To long in aching music . . .

Yet Lérmontov has not a few passages of sense beautifully reflected in sound; of these passages the last two stanzas of *Branch of Palestine* constitute, perhaps, the most fascinating example; in it a sense of peace and holy calm is induced by the use of open vowels, labial and liquid internal alliteration, balance of words and phrases, and slowness of movement. It is interesting to compare this with another mood, wherein longing and motion are expressed by a dactylic measure of a lighter, speedier movement—in *The Clouds*. Again the very breath of summer is wafted through the delicate stanzas of *When Ripples the Yellowing Cornfield*.* But although it is delightful thus to

---

* *Note.*—The following prose translations will give some idea of the content of the passages referred to as examples of good onomatopeia:

1. From *Branch of Palestine:*

"Preserved by secret care, before the holy image thou standest, branch of Jerusalem, trusty sentinel of the holy thing!

"Transparent twilight, ray of the lamp, casket and cross, holy symbol . . . All is full of peace and joy around thee and above thee."

collect examples of a poet's mastery over his instrument, yet it is now time to end.

* * * * * *

Three months later, when daily the heat was growing intense in the deeper valleys, and the fields around Batúm were reminiscent of " home " in their springtide freshness, we watched the hills of Caucasia, illumined by the setting sun, fade away into the grey mist as the boat bore us swiftly westwards. But it is pleasurable again in the works of a great poet mentally to revisit the scene of what was in many ways a happy exile: through the printed page of Lérmontov—

> A Russian general one day
> From out the hills unto Tiflís . . .

—rise up the high, dark hills enclosing the broad valley of the brown, turgid, torrential Kurá; once again we call up the wide Golovínskiy Prospékt, and the long Mikháylovskiy Prospékt, and think once again of those many good folk who received the stranger-guest as though he were one of their own kin.

C. P. L. DENNIS.

---

2. *The Clouds:*

" Dear clouds of heaven, wanderers eternal, over the azure steppe in a pearly chain ye course, even as I, O exiles, from the beloved north to the southern coast.

" Who is't that pursues you? Fate's sentence? Or secret jealousy? Or open malice? Or does crime weigh heavily upon you? Or the virulent slander of friends?

" No: the untilled fields have wearied you . . . foreign to you are our passions, and foreign sufferings; ever cold, ever free, ye have no homeland, ye have no exile."

* * *

Members of the Poetry Society are invited to attend (without payment or ticket) a meeting at the London Institution, Finsbury Square, E.C., at 5 p.m., on November 11, when Mr. Wallis Mansford will give an address on his friend, " James Elroy Flecker, Scholar, Poet, Dramatist," and selections from the poet's works will be read by his father, Dr. W. H. Flecker, and Mrs. Florence Everett. Sir Denison Ross, director of the School of Oriental Studies, who has taken part in several Poetry Society meetings, will preside.

THREE POETS

I

EMILY BRONTË

SPIRIT of wind and fire,
Lover of moor and sea,
Wild, untamed of desire,
Lonely, vagrant and free;
Life was too feeble to bind
Long her impetuous soul,
Only through death could it find
All its desires and its goal.

II

MARY COLERIDGE

She felt life's mystery
Of joys and fears,
Of griefs too deep and strange
For mortal tears;
Born 'neath the influence
Of wonder's star,
In hidden spirit-lands
She travelled far.

III

ALICE MEYNELL

A soul withdrawn, absorbed
In view of Paradise,
Yet, loving sweets of earth,
She was alert to prize
Cornfields and mounting hills,
Sunrise and close of day,
Colour and phrase and song,
Laughter and children's play.

M. C. LOCKHEAD.

THE DYNAMICS OF AMERICAN POETRY—XI

EMILY DICKINSON—WILLA SIBERT CATHER—ROBERT HILLYER

EMILY DICKINSON'S position in the literature of poetry is unique. Remote, exclusive and exquisite, she burned with the fire of a very personal emotion and has left behind to the reading world fine evidences of her having passed this way. I emphasise "reading-world," for nothing of hers has become the public property of the general world. Perhaps it is not great enough . . . perhaps it is too soon to know! It is not yet a half century since her death in the University town of Amherst.

Out of her home in Amherst she rarely stepped, out of Amherst still more rarely. About her is mystery, and not even the recent volumes of her complete poems with an introduction by Martha Dickinson Bianchi (Little Brown and Co.), or *The Life and Letters of Emily Dickinson* by the same niece (Houghton Mifflin Co.) lift completely the veil or shadow. Direct and passionate and shy, we learn to think of her as we seek to penetrate beyond her walled garden—to search her out and know her for ourselves—now that she has gone.

A haunting sense of a spiritual kinship with Charlotte Bronte comes to one in the seeking after her. Born of good people, in a religious New England community in 1830-days, she partook of their moral persuasions and necessarily their limiting range. One of several children, there was the fine family life—more absorbing in those days than the distractions of the world now permit it to be. By those who would measure her now, she is at times called mystic and pantheist, but not pagan, again—a primitive. It is quite plain through it all she was a loving woman with an ardent New England nature and its rigid surroundings in the 1830-days.

We read of a love affair that led her desires outside her principles and belief, since it meant the inevitable destruction of another woman's life, and we read she overcame this temptation. It seems almost ill-bred to talk about it,

since she bore the trial and happiness of it so quietly. Undoubtedly it coloured her poetic expression. She writes a friend: "Nothing has happened but loneliness, perhaps too daily to relate."

We read of her great love of words, and sense it in her sparing use of them to give her thought. Her piano was her constant companion. She lived in a world of dreams and went little into so-called society. Those who had the happiness to know her speak of her piercing, penetrating eyes, her rich gleaming gold-auburn hair, and her strangely puzzling beauty. Perhaps her best known and loved poem is :—

If I can stop one heart from breaking,
I shall not live in vain ;
If I can ease one life the aching,
Or cool one pain
Or help one fainting robin
Unto his nest again
I shall not live in vain.

Expressive of the love she may have grown through are the following :—

Alter ? When the hills do,
Falter ? When the sun
Question if his glory
Be the perfect one.
Surfeit ? When the daffodil
Doth of the dew ;
Even as herself, O friend
I will of you.

Another is a picture of her garden, sadly seen :

New feet within my garden go,
New fingers stir the sod,
A troubadour upon the elm
Betrays the solitude.

New children play upon the green
New weary sleep below,
And still the pensive Spring returns,
And still the punctual snow.

With all the minor note there is bravery about her, and loving her and wanting more of her we will read lastly her *Dawn :*

When night is almost done
And sunrise grows so near
That we can touch the spaces
It's time to smooth the hair

And get the dimples ready
And wonder we could care
For that old faded midnight
That frightened but an hour.

In the enlarged and more colorful opportunity of to-day, with the keenness and reality of feeling which belonged to Emily Dickinson, what might she not have given us to-day ?

Willa Sibert Cather.

Willa Sibert Cather gives us from her own knowledge of American life, and we may depend on her pictures, in which we find a Virginia background and a father who exhibited pioneer blood and crossed the Alleghannies and the Mississippi Valley to settle in the West, and on a ranch in Nebraska, when Miss Cather was but nine. From such neighbours as the little girl found in the sparsely settled country, Scandinavians, Russians and Bohemian farmers, she must have made her first world contacts.

The nearest school was at Red Cloud, and there she received her only schooling until she entered the State University and graduated at nineteen, going at once to Pittsburgh, where she was employed on the *Pittsburgh Leader* as telegraph editor and dramatic critic. On this paper she had her first experience in writing, and shortly after published her first book of verse, *April Twilights* (Badger, Boston, 1903), a slim book of poetry filled with her woods in winter, white birches, evening songs and laments, legends and taverns and hawthorne trees, the night express and rose time. In Rose Time follows :

Winter lasts a five month,
Springtime stays but one ;
Yellow blow the rye-fields
When the rose is done.
Pines are clad in Yuletide
When the birch is bare
And the holly's greenest
In the frosty air.

Sorrow keeps a stone house
Builded grim and gray ;
Pleasure hath a straw thatch
Hung with lanterns gay.
On her petty savings
Niggard Prudence thrives,
Passion, ere the moonset,
Bleeds a thousand lives.

Virtue hath a warm hearth—
Folly's dead and drowned ;
Friendship hath her own when
Love is underground.

Ah ! for me the madness
Of the spendthrift flower,
Burning myriad sunsets
In a single hour.

Miss Cather writes me :

" I am afraid you will have a hard time proving that I have been an ' effective force in American poetry.' I do not take myself seriously as a poet. However, since you ask me which ones of my poems I prefer, I will tell you some of them. *A Likeness*, *A Silver Cup*, *Going Home*, and *Macon Prairie*, I think are the best ones. I believe *Spanish Johnny* is most popular."

A Likeness is a poem of six stanzas, and I give here the first and the fifth. The poem is addressed to a portrait bust of an Unknown, Capitol, Rome :

In every line a supple beauty—
The restless head a little bent—
Disgust of pleasure, scorn of duty,
The unseeing eyes of discontent.

I often come to sit beside him,
  This youth who passed and left no trace
Of good or ill that did betide him,
  Save the disdain upon his face.

* * * * *

Tricked by the forms of things material—
  The solid-seeming arch and stone,
The noise of war, the pomp Imperial,
  The heights and depths about a throne—
He missed, among the shapes diurnal,
  The old, deep-travelled road from pain,
The thoughts of men, which are eternal,
  In which, eternal, men remain.

A Silver Cup is too long to give in its entirety; here is a line or two from here and there:

In Venice,
Under the Rialto bridge, one summer morning
In a mean shop I bought a silver goblet.
. . . . This wretched litter left from living.

* * * * *

In some dark junk-shop window I shall leave you,
Some place of poor effects from broken houses,
Where desperate women go to sell a saucepan
And frightened men to buy a baby's cradle.
Here in New York, a city full of exiles,
Short marriages and early deaths and heart-breaks;
In some such window, with the blue vases,
The busts of Presidents in plaster, gilded.

* * * * *

There I shall leave you, a sole gracious object.

The last verse from *Going Home* (Burlington Route)—

How smoothly the trains run beyond the Missouri;
Even in my sleep I know when I have crossed the river.
The wheels turn as if they were glad to go;
They run like running water,
Like Youth, running away . . .
They spin bright along bright rails,
Singing and humming,

Singing and humming,
They run remembering,
They run rejoicing,
As if they, too, were going home.

Macon Prairie (Nebraska) has some very telling lines, full of fine pictures. I will give a few of them :—

From all the net of caution and convenience
She snatched her high heart for the great adventure,
Broke her bright bubble under far horizons,—

* * *

Boring directly toward the fiery sunset.
Over the red grass prairies, shaggy-coated,

* * *

Across the tablelands and rugged ridges,
Through the coarse grasses which the oxen breasted,
Blue-stem and bunch-grass, red as sea-marsh samphire.
Always the similar, soft undulations
Of the free-breathing earth in golden sunshine,
The hardy wind, and dun hawks flying over
Against the unstained firmament of heaven.

Spanish Johnny follows :—

The old West, the old time,
The old wind singing through
The red, red grass a thousand miles,
And Spanish Johnny, you !
He'd sit beside the water-ditch
When all his herd was in,
And never mind a child, but sing
To his mandolin.

The big stars, the blue night,
The moon-enchanted plain :
The olive man who never spoke,
But sang the songs of Spain.
His speech with men was wicked talk—
To hear it was a sin ;
But those were golden things he said
To his mandolin.

The gold songs, the gold stars,
The world so golden then :
And the hand so tender to a child

Had killed so many men.
He died a hard death long ago
Before the Road came in ;
The night before he swung, he sang
To his mandolin.

Miss Cather is most known through her several novels, *Alexander's Bridge*, *O Pioneers*, *The Song of the Lark*, *My Antonia*, *Youth* and the *Bright Medusa*, and *One of Ours*, which won the Pulitzer prize for the best novel in 1922.

I shall end this review with *L'Envoi*, my favourite poem of Miss Cather :—

Where are the loves that we have loved before
When once we are alone and shut the door ?
No matter whose the arms that held me fast,
The arms of darkness hold me at the last.
No matter down what primrose path I tend,
I kiss the lips of silence in the end.
No matter on what heart I found delight,
I come again unto the breast of Night.
No matter when or how love did befall,
'Tis Loneliness that loves me best of all,
And in the end she claims me, and I know
That she will stay, though all the rest may go.
No matter whose the eyes that I would keep
Near in the dark, 'tis in the eyes of Sleep
That I must look and look forever more,
When once I am alone, and shut the door.

ROBERT SILLIMAN HILLYER.

Robert Silliman Hillyer writes me in a recent letter :— " My whole effort, technically, has been to employ all the old forms in new combinations. Free verse I have never employed." This gives the keynote to Mr. Hillyer's works, which are numerous, including the volumes *Sonnets and Other Lyrics*, *The Five Books of Youth*, *Alchemy : A Symphonic Poem*, *The Hills Give Promise*, *The Coming Forth by Day*, and, in collaboration with others, *Eight Harvard Poets* and *A Book of Danish Verse*.

Mr. Hillyer's preferences are :—the sonnet sequence running through *Sonnets and Other Lyrics*, especially *Sonnet* I

(Harvard Press, 1917) *Sonnet* 1 from the fifth book of *The Five Books of Youth* (Brentano's, 1920), *The Letter* from *The Hills Give Promise* (Brimmer, 1923), and *Elegy on a Mermaid Cast Ashore on Plymouth Rock.*

Robert Hillyer is a much occupied man outside of receiving and transmitting impressions and interpretations of our life. He is the President of the New England Poetry Club and a graduate of Harvard University in 1917. He served overseas as lieutenant in the A.E.F. For five years now he has been teaching English at Harvard. Mr. Hillyer has won a number of distinguished poetry prizes, and it will be remembered shared with Miss V. Sackville-West the Bartlett Sea-Sonnet Prize recently with his beautiful sonnet beginning :—

> The rivers of the years find rest in thee,
> And thou hast drunk our ages one by one.

A Letter follows :—

> Last night I wrote a letter to my friend :
> I said, " Come back, we two are getting old ;
> Our separate lives wear on ; the years are cold,
> And loneliness grows bitter toward the end."
> I called you back, but you shall not behold
> Those wise, sad words that my desire has penned ;
> Last night I wrote what I shall never send,
> The page your white hands never shall unfold.
>
> There in my desk it lies ; pride guards the key ;
> And pride, alas, is stronger than desire.
> Years hence perhaps some stranger, pityingly,
> Will yield the faded secret to the fire,
> Where it will join in dust those separate dead,
> Sorrow who wrote and Love who never read.

Mr. Hillyer's *Elegy on a Dead Mermaid Washed Ashore at Plymouth Rock* must be quoted :—

> Pallidly sleeping, the Ocean's mysterious daughter
> Lies in the lee of the boulder that shattered her charms.
> Dawn rushes over the level horizon of water
> And touches to flickering crimson her face and her arms,
> While every scale in that marvellous tail
> Quivers with colour like sun on a Mediterranean sail.

Could you not keep to the ocean that lulls the equator,
Soulless, immortal, and fatally fair to the gaze ?
Or were you called to the North by an ecstasy greater
Than any you knew in those ancient and terrible days
When all your delight was to flash on the sight
Of the wondering sailor and lure him to death in the watery night ?

Was there, perhaps on the deck of some faraway vessel,
A lad from New England whose fancy you failed to ensnare ?
Who, born of this virtuous rock, and accustomed to wrestle
With beauty in all of its forms, became your despair,
And awoke in your breast a mortal unrest
That dragged you away from the south to your death in the cold
northwest ?

Pallidly sleeping, your body is shorn of its magic,
But Death gives a soul to whatever is lovely that dies.
Now Ocean reclaims you again, lest a marvel so tragic
Remain to be mocked by our earthly and virtuous eyes,
And reason redeems already what seems
Only a fable like all of our strange and beautiful dreams.

He draws our attention to *Ave* and *Threnody*. Here is the former :—

Peace be with you, familiar trees
That guard the hilly land and river ways ;
And you, my oak, guard still the memories of nights and days
Sun swept, rain dark, and always beautiful.
You understand,
Great oak upon the hill,
And you forest trees that pull the wind down the valley's
length
With your tempestuous strength !
Keep tryst with me, my friends, my friend,
At the journey's end.
From exile unto exile wandering,
I hear across the sea the trees that sing
A leafy chorus of the eternal spring.
On wild black horses down the hurrying skies
The riders from the hills go by in storms,
And cry aloud : " The Sleeper shall awake !
The moon is waning and the Sun shall rise ! "
Then running forth, I watch slow flame that forms
A trembling arc of colour on the lake.

Bathed in that white ecstatic dawn, I do not mark
Time's footsteps on the bridge whose stones are day and dark :
How earthly seasons insignificant go past
Like autumn shadows trooping down the blast.

Familiar trees, green be your boughs !
The exile comes again to count your leaves.
My tree, upon your hill I build my house beneath whose eaves
Shall nest the homing love who never dies.
Through sun and rain,
Great oak, keep vigil still against the hostile skies ;
You also, sentinels of the road
That leads to my abode !
Peace be with us my friends, my friend,
At the journey's end.

I must depart now from Mr. Hillyer's choice and give some of the beautiful poetry in his book, *The Hills*, that touches me deeply. Lines from Canto IV follow :—

Life in a myriad fleshly masquerades,
So various, so strangely one,
That seasons just begun
Repeat the idiom of the dead.
Last year, a century hence, this afternoon,
Waves on the same tide, following the moon.

And from Mr. Hillyer's Interlude which I would like to give in its entirety but cannot, for space :—

Is there a dream so flooded by the spirit
That we can dive into its still delight
  Beyond earth's flare and crash,
Without a voice or song insistent that we hear it,
Without a colour to persuade our sight,
  Or dim seductive flash
To stir some reminiscent joy, and so endear it
To the fond hearts, that waking into pain
Dispel this peace and bid us feel again ?

* * *

Then for a quiet moment, let me live
That life in which the world's tremendous psalm
  Sinks to a fitful breath.

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

STEEL ARMOUR AND WOVEN THREADS

"We heard the accent of the King of kings,
And in our memory of immortal things
We stored the prophets' words."

THE memory of the furnace and the sweat, the clanging of the hammer and the toil resounds through these lines from *Voices of the Stones* by A. E. (Macmillan) and the echo of these severities is even yet more emphatic in *The Sirens*, by Laurence Binyon (Macmillan).

Hymn the hand that builds the wall
And spans the river, and arches over
Man the worshipper and lover
Song-like stone; the hand so strong
To strike, yet in whose touch is all
Life's mystery that woos from things
Their strength, as music from the strings.

The power of the cunning hand, the knowledge of the metal in which he works and the mastery over the tools with which he fashions the armour, all these are revealed in the works of these two poets. In their austere company we are summoned away (and with what eager relief do we go) from roses and pale hands, and sighs and languorous lilies, from the overworked moon in all manner of coldnesses and whitenesses, to the forge on Olympus where the Titans hammer the steel into a thousand beautiful shapes; we are ushered into the presence of minds that dwell on spiritual mountain peaks, what then do we reck of the strenuous climbing that we, earth-sojourners, have to undergo in order to stand near? The pretty creature who prates of "loving poetry" may be scared by such trumpet notes pealing from the heights, but that is a consummation only to be desired.

Hear this from Binyon's *Victories*:

I heard a trumpet from beyond the moon,
Piercing ice-blue gulfs of air,
Cry down the secret waters of the world,
Under the far sea-streams, to summon there
The foundered ships, the splendid ships, the lost ships.

The marshalling of ordered vowels and consonants, the

immensity of vision, are as a march of music and a great picture all in one triumphant whole. The Song of the Sirens is the calling to high adventure, and he who hears this singing must go forward regardless and uncareful though the quest be fatal. To lose all on such a voyage is to gain all.

> Hymn the lost, who never
> Found, but kept high heart to steer
> Outward toward the mark they meant,
> Sailing out of sight of land.
> Wail not them, nor lost endeavour,
> For they heard what tranced the ear,
> Filled the exulting soul, the song
> Pale and prudent mortals fear,
> Song of those who, out of time
> Sang the heights the immortals climb,
> The Sirens.

A. E. in *Voices of the Stones* does not wield so mighty a hammer, but with his own rare tool he carves the traceries and the delicate fancies, and the deep inward poetry of his thoughts quivers in almost every line. The dedication alone is a thing of beauty ; as the maiden, in the old fairy tale, had but to utter words and precious stones fell from her lips, even so A. E. in prose or verse enshrines his jewels of speech. Space forbids the quoting of many lines from these two poets, but it must be permitted to us to conclude this all too brief survey with these lines from Laurence Binyon.

> —trumpet thrilled to trumpet thro' the night,
> And torches told of glistering strange attire,
> Where met those three kings on one errand led.
> What image shaped they of the World's Desire,
> What presence throned in majesty and might,
> As they went musing, deep in hope and dread,
> And under vast cope of the wheeling skies
> Found but a naked child, a child new-born ?

Down from these " ice-blue gulfs of air " we drop to the woven stuff of *Red Oleanders* by Rabindranath Tagore (Macmillan). Tagore weaves a half mystic intention in violent coloured strands; the words, or strands, are rough,

and the figures of the drama move in and out with seemingly vague meaning. The "Voice from behind the Network" promises a foreboding mystery, but this is dispelled in its uttered banalities; "Go, go away, or else there will be trouble," it cries, and we almost see a patient policeman remonstrating with a not too inebriated reveller; and when Nandini cries with delightful bluntness to this hidden personage, "Don't you feel ashamed to be got up like a bogey-man?" we can but heartily re-echo her. One of the characters, Bishu, appears to attempt, in a mild fashion, Chestertonian paradoxes, and he utters the cryptic remark that "Crocodiles' teeth begin by smiling and end by biting." Now it is a truth that needs no repetition that teeth are primarily intended for biting, but not the most experienced dentist ever yet saw a tooth smile! Eventually the "Voice" comes to sight as the King, and there is chatter of "Flag-worship"; we might suppose, therefore, that the whole is intended to convey some hidden denunciation of British rule in India, but by reason of the entire poem being wild and confused we cannot be sure even of that. *Red Oleanders* may possibly carry deep teaching to Tagore's worshippers; we confess that, to us, it appears merely unbeautiful and tedious.

Even woven stuff wears thin in *A Poetry Recital*, James Stephens (Macmillan), and it is with a sense of deep depression that we note such a name as James Stephens fathering the following:

> If I could get to heaven
> By eating all I could
> I'd become a pig
> And I'd gobble up my food.

Then come similar lines concerning a monkey and heaven, and these are concluded by

> But the way that we are told of
> Bars the monkey and the pig
> And it's very, very difficult
> Besides that.

The only retaliation possible is to cry "It's enough to make a poor man bury his head in the ink." Must it be said that

the Kingdom of Poetry is like unto the Kingdom of Heaven ? the pig and the monkey cannot abide in either. Then there are two sets of verses that have minute instructions as to how they should be read (only, to imitate Voltaire : " I see no necessity " to read them at all).

He wills
To bé
Alóne
With thée
A stóne
A stréam
A ský
A trée.

This you are ordered to read counting two beats at the end of each line, but it is vastly more probable that the irate hearer would end by beating the reader, and counting many more than " two beats." The second of these efforts (O the forge of Mount Olympus !) carries this inward criticism of itself :

No dréam, no sight,
No sóund, no sense,
Is thére.

Alas ! " 'tis true, and pity 'tis, 'tis true." Then there is a thing entitled " Righteous Anger," and this ends on a note far more akin to the ravings of a sot than any matter of righteousness.

" May she marry a ghost and bear him a kitten, and may
The High King of Glory permit her to get the mange."

Is this wit ? is it poetry ? is it even cynicism ? (O ice-blue gulfs of air !) When Ezekiel dug through the wall of what had formerly been part of the Temple of the Almighty he could see horrible obscene paintings on the interior. We sympathise with and heartily share in the great Prophet's anger with those who thus profane the Holy places. Let us turn and strive to hear the Sirens even though the call is to material death :

Hymn the finder of the flame
Hymn the seekers !

ARTHUR HOOD.

POETRY AND SCIENCE.

IN the second half of the last century the words science and religion were constantly coupled in the titles of articles, books and debates. At times it was religion versus science, at other times it was *vice versa*. The inquiring mind was seeking to learn the relation between these two great factors in our daily life.

A change has taken place of late. Now we find yoked together science and poetry. Books and essays have already been written on the subject. In *The New Decalogue of Science* (Boobs-Merrill Co.) Albert Edward Wiggam devotes a chapter to "The Duty of Art," in which he points out that "The next great poet of the world, whether he write poetry, paint pictures, tells stories or builds temples, will be the man who understands these things." In the book, *Poetry and Science* (Sherratt & Hughes), Oliver C. de C. Ellis, M.Sc., Ph.D., Research Investigator in the Ministry of Mines, gives a chapter to considering the part played by science in the poetry of great poets. Henry Woodhouse, the editor of *Scientific Age*, commenting on the work of The Poetry Society through the POETRY REVIEW, in an article entitled "Poetry on an International Platform —With Science," points out that the great poets, including Horace, Dante, Milton, Shakespeare, Coleridge, Carlyle, Pope, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Whittier and Emerson used poetry in their times to express *truths* and to influence people and nations to the attainment of great ideals. Berton Braley, himself an accurate author and poet, has commented in the New York *Evening Post Literary Review* on the POETRY REVIEW's scientific platform, expressing himself in favour of having more scientific knowledge in poetry.

The October, 1925, *Atlantic Monthly*, printed an article by I. A. Richards entitled "Science and Poetry," which is introduced with a quotation from Matthew Arnold, reading in part:

> "The future of poetry is immense, because in poetry, where it is worthy of its high destinies, our race, as time goes on, will find an ever surer and surer stay."

The poems that have withstood the winnowing hand of time are those that express truths, and are not made obsolete by the findings of each age. The subject need not be related to mechanical or mathematical science. Science is the art of ascertaining truth in anything. Ruskin, who Edwin Markham considers the most spiritual of the poets, said that "science deals exclusively with things as they are in themselves"; and that "the work of science is to substitute facts for appearances, and demonstrations for impressions." The poem that deals with fundamental verities,

with their inherent music and charm, can tune the mind with the infinite. This is illustrated in Shakespeare's lines:

> "How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
> Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
> Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night
> Become the touches of sweet harmony.
> * * *
> There is not the smallest orb which thou beholdest
> But in his motions like an angel sings."

Alfred Noyes's *The Book of Earth* (Blackwood, Stokes & Co.) relates poetry to science. It comes within Aristotle's definition of an epic, having a dignified theme, organic unity and an orderly progress of the action. Out of the grab-bag of emotions into the laboratory of science Alfred Noyes carries us as he reviews the evolution of man and man's relation to God. In past ages Dante and Milton gave us a theologic presentation of this baffling subject. Many of the poets dealt with some of the aspects, as when Pope expressed the oneness of creation:

> "All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
> Whose body Nature is, and God the soul."

Tennyson more tersely recognised

> "One God, one law, one element,
> And one far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves."

Noyes goes further, and he is more analytical:

> "Unless God made for every separate isle
> As it arose, new tribes of plants, birds, beasts,
> In variant image of the tribes beset
> Upon their nearest continent, grading all
> By time and place and distance from the shore,
> The bond between them was the bond of blood,
> All, all had branched from one original tree."

Glen Frank points out that Mr. Wiggam, in his *New Decalogue of Science*, "takes the man in the street on a tour of the laboratories and explains in words ordinary human beings can understand what a fascinating and human thing modern science is." Like Berton Braley and Edgar Allan Poe before him, Mr. Wiggam regrets the ignorance of some of our poets. He says:

"We see our poets giving us chemistry and physics that are not

of this world. Keats and Shelley, as the Cambridge biologist Haldane has pointed out, were the last great English poets who understood chemistry. Chemistry never made a poet, but it can help him to give us truer poetry. Tennyson could not have written *Locksley Hall* without a fair comprehension of science. Even Shakespeare often gives us a wrong cosmogony and psychology.

"The critic unschooled in science assures us his poetry does not suffer. But the scientist knows his poetry does suffer because anything suffers that isn't true. No wrong conception can give us a right ideal."

Braley aptly reminds us that :—

"Had a historian informed Keats that Balboa and not Cortez was the discoverer of the Pacific, Keats, being a craftsman, would have replaced Cortez in his lines with Balboa, and a purely historic but nevertheless obvious flaw in one of the greatest of poems would have been removed.

"When a poem is in the realm of utter fancy technical experts are not needed, but a poem about a definite occurrence, about a tangible object, about a historical or political or military event, in which the basic facts are awry, fails in just that measure, however great it may be otherwise. It does not, for example, concern the experts whether Paul Revere ever rode or not, but had Longfellow, through lack of historical knowledge, dated the battle of Lexington in 1793, the desirability of technical historical advice would be evident.

"Technical experts cannot make a poem, but they can keep a poet from writing a nautical song in which all the sea terms are wrong, from putting the Brooklyn Bridge over the Thames, or writing a race-track story in which the argot is incorrect.

"Kipling's verse is loved and admired by men who do the things he sings about, not only because it has a swing and a power to it, but because Kipling either is himself technically informed as to the terms of many trades or gets that information from experts. A painter, a story writer, a poet, will be no less an artist for knowing his facts first. And I can see no more incongruity in having 'city experts' on a committee to judge poems on cities than in having a practical builder on a committee to award the contract for a new city hall. A sonnet on Chicago might be poetically very fine, but if it put the Woolworth Tower on Michigan Avenue and placed the Washington Monument on State Street, it wouldn't be a poem about Chicago. And poets have done just as silly things as that in the past."

In *Poetry and Science*, Dr. Ellis refers to Browning as a naturalist and Housman as a physicist, thus :

" Nature-study ! SCIENCE ! I do not know whether the greater naturalist or poet was revealed in Browning when he wrote :

> ' That's the wise thrush ; he sings each song twice over
> Lest you should think he never could recapture
> The first fine, careless rapture.'

" You have long regarded that as exquisite poetry. So it is. But it is science, too. How delightfully, how unforgettably it recreates the whole cheeky assurance of the bird. Of a chaffinch it would have been nonsense. But it was a thrush. What beauty physics has contributed to this of A. E. Housman's :

> ' But over sea and continent from sight
> Safe to the Indies has the earth conveyed
> The vast and moon-eclisping cone of night,
> Her towering foolscap of eternal shade.
>
> See, in mid-heaven the sun is mounted ; hark
> The belfries tingle to the noonday chime,
> 'Tis silent, and the subterranean dark
> Has crossed the nadir and begins to climb.' "

In his " Poetry on an International Platform—With Science," Henry Woodhouse, commenting on the movement to internationalise poetry, states that " there is as much genuine science as poetry, and plenty of both back of this new movement."

He states further :

" Progress is, as Browning said, ' the law of life,' and raises new platforms upon which things may develop and endure.

" The things and people that do not succeed in making the higher platforms soon become back numbers, and if they are not well-rooted in usefulness they are forgotten.

" Poetry is too deep-set as a permanent institution to ever be completely forgotten, but it has periodically failed to rise to the new platforms set by Progress. Whenever that happened a leader usually came to the rescue, and poetry henceforth developed on the higher platform.

" To raise poetry to a higher platform was what Horace tried to do close to twenty centuries ago, when he pointed out that

> 'Tis not sufficient to combine
> Well-chosen words in a well-ordered line.

" Carlyle was also one of those who did not believe that poetry consisted purely of versification, and said :

" How does the poet speak to men with power, but by being still more than they."

" Pope complained of so-called poetry of his age that was

> . . . Only couplet fraught
> With some unmeaning thing
> They call a thought.

" They, and Dante, Milton, Shakespeare, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Whittier and Emerson belonged to the comparatively small circle of representative poets who used poetry in their own times to express truths and to influence people and nations to the attainment of greater ideals.

" New ages bring new truths—new discoveries, new inventions, new achievements and new philosophic concepts, and these influence the basis of human relationships. The mechanics of living change and the component parts of scenes of daily life differ from the old. It is more the poet's mission than any one else's to interpret the new truths, and to depict in a brief poetic picture their outstanding values. When poetry fails to carry out its mission, the world is poorer for lacking the stimulus of good poetry and poetry sinks for having failed in her mission."

Mr. Richards' article " Science and Poetry," in the *Atlantic Monthly*, is more an essay on the science of poetry, and reminds me of interesting discussions I had on the subject with the noted scientist Hudson Maxim, the author of *The Science of Poetry* (Funk and Wagnalls), a monumental work in which, as in the case of Mr. Richards' essay, he discusses what is poetry ? After analysing the evolution of analogical speech, Mr. Maxim says :

" Let us cite some examples of real poetry, which are recognised even by the acknowledged authorities as being poetry of the highest class, and assay them for poetic gold, to help us discover what constitutes poetry. Take these lines of Shakespeare :

> ' Jocund day
> Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.'

> ' Thou art the ruins of the noblest man
> That ever lived in the tide of times.' "

Take the following lines from Edwin Markham's " Man with the Hoe " :

" How will you ever straighten up this shape ;
Touch it again with immortality ;
Give back the upward looking and the light ;
Rebuild in it the music and the dream ? "

Take the lines of Marlowe :

" The horses that guide the golden eye of Heaven,
And blow the morning from their nostrils,"

or the lines by Marlowe, speaking of Helen of Troy :

" Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium ? "

It will be noted that Mr. Maxim here has selected lines having vivid poetic imagery based on historic or other knowledge, and that he belongs to the growing group of those who urge bringing all possible truth to bear in the writing of poetry. To the initiated mind there can be no fundamental clash between science and poetry. Poetry is no less poetry when it squares itself with scientific fact. As Emerson said : " Science surpasses the old miracles of mythology."

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

* * *

The passing of Dr. Arthur C. Benson deprived us of a very gracious spirit and a kindly friend, and it is hard to think so much graciousness and kindliness should die out of a world in which envy and malice and all uncharitableness abound. Something of the Master's spirit is preserved in his *Selected Poems* (The Bodley Head, 6s. net), which tell of his tastes and preferences. Sonnets on Gray and Keats, odes to Music and Winchelsea reveal the poet's loves, but even more characteristic of him are the tender lyrics on the dragonfly, knapweed, loosestrife—" Many are the hearts that have loved thee, loose strife, Very true and tender was the heart that loved thee best "—water-mint, the sparrow, the barbel, the cat, the yaffle, the mole, the toad, the beetle. He knew and loved man and beast, bird and flower with an insight and a tenderness not found in mere literary loves. The *Selected Poems* are his best memorial.

* * *

The lines which so admirably summarised the impression made by the Aldworth visit, published in our last issue, were contributed by Florence M. Close. We regret the name of our highly-appreciated colleague got transposed into " Coates " in the report.

SOME INDIVIDUAL ANTHOLOGIES.

MR. LEWIS HIND'S 100 *Second Best Poems* (Philpot, 2s. 6d.) is another anthology that sets an example. It is the kind of thing we should do for ourselves—cut out and preserve the occasional poems in newspapers, magazines and books that appeal peculiarly to ourselves. Many of us do it—and are too shy to show the collection. I know a naval officer who carries a pocket book stuffed with such cuttings and is not ashamed to show them. But to him they are not second-best poems, they are the best he comes across in his casual general reading, the reflection of his own taste and judgment. Mr. Hind's definition of a second best poem is an indictment of the reader's taste or a reflection on the real merits and value of the best poetry. He says, " it is one that a reader likes, not because he has been told to like it, but because he loves it he keeps it by him, it helps him to live." But while that definition applies to most of us, all but the pedantic who will not be sincere with themselves, it is very hard on the " best poetry " which it excludes from our real personal appreciation. But we might discuss the rightness or contrariness of Mr. Hind's definition for ever. That is his way, he is provocative in a genial manner, not to arouse animosity but to promote friendliness. Only the prigs—of whom there are too many and whose carping we suffer from daily—could quarrel with the gentle, disarming but most experienced and wise editor of the *Academy* in its palmiest days, when he " crowned " Stephen Phillips for *Marpessa* and was the considerate friend and editor of wayward Francis Thompson and other men of genius who made " The Nineties " brilliant days. They would get what they deserved —would find him a formidable antagonist, able to prick at a word the bubble of their petty conceit. You would not think so from this very human, almost naive collection of " second best poems," which germinated at a Savoy Chapel " Reading " to which Mr. Hind conveyed piles of old note books in which he had copied out or pasted in poems that had touched or moved him which he wished to remember and his audience to appreciate. Some readers will remember that occasion with delight ; the larger number who did not enjoy this first-hand introduction to Mr. Hind's " second best poems " may find all and many more in this volume, with many explanatory remarks that we cannot discuss here any more than we can give any idea of the range of Mr. Hind's roving taste. If we are excited to follow his example, I am sure we will add almost all his hundred to our own personal collection and will be grateful to him for preserving for us many poems we had previously missed. Mr. Hind might have been arrogant, instead he is very diffident

in his "explanation"; he leaves it to younger men to claim to recognise the best poems of the year or the century when they mean that the poems they present are in their personal judgment the best of the comparatively few poems that have come under their notice. Mr. Hind, whose selection is drawn largely from newspapers, suggests that an alternative anthology of newspaper poems might be compiled. Sir Robertson Nichol, when writing very kindly of THE POETRY REVIEW some years ago, made a similar suggestion. Some of the most impressive verses of the day appear like fireflies in the daily and weekly papers and are lost sight of. No one qualified to do so has attempted to preserve them, to sift them and publish the fine flour not as "the best poems of the year," but as the best and most appealing that he has had the good fortune to see. Not many papers publish "occasional verse" now, but if we include the magazines also more poems are published then any one collector can keep tab of. And when you add American papers, which make a feature of daily poems and syndicate to millions of readers the output of the favourites of the period, Walt Mason, and other good friends of ours who spread the power of poetry over the American continent, a corps of assistants would be needed. Even Mr. Braithwaite is not equal to the task. This sifting and selection should be a department of THE POETRY REVIEW, with Mr. Lewis Hind in charge. Some portentous spinners of dull stuff they call "poetry" would question Mr. Hind's and our authority, particularly when they found the gate too strait for them to pass through, but it would be a delightful provocative enterprise. In the meantime, we hope, Mr. Hind will give us another hundred of his "second best," and will qualify that description. He really means "the best in poetry"—and that is what concerns us. The Poetry Society was founded "to promote, in the words of Matthew Arnold, 'a clearer deeper sense of the best in poetry and of the strength and joy to be drawn from it.'" We were criticised for dealing with the admittedly "second best" when this term appeared on our Savoy programme. But in the truest sense Mr. Hind's type of poem represents the best in poetry from which joy and strength, consolation and inspiration, can be drawn. He has ruled out the Immortals only because we have them and know them. Mr. Hind has snatched from oblivion many poems that deserve to be immortal but because they are not by Tennyson and Wordsworth, Milton and Shakespeare, would have passed out of knowledge, but for his intervention.

Another subject anthology is *The Poetry of Flight*, edited by

Stella Wolfe Murray, with a foreword by Sir Samuel Hoare, M.P., the Secretary of State for Air (Heath Cranton, 7s. 6d. net). Miss Murray deserves credit for her enterprise. She has essayed a piece of book-making not hitherto attempted. At the memorable Poets' Descendants' Dinner of The Poetry Society in 1911, the Duke of Norfolk, who attended as representative of the sonnet writing Earl of Surrey, suggested that aviation provided a new subject for poets. We had no idea then how vast and complex that subject would become. Miss Murray hopes her collection may " serve as a reminder to those who love poetry that there is a vast new field of beauty of which they know little, beauty untold of which they can only dream until they have flown for themselves and seen with their own eyes. Photographs, airscapes of portions of our earth seen from the plane convey but little save to the practical eye, but to the eye of the artist and the heart of the poet it is the skies themselves, the ever-changing cloudland scenes, that impress the mind with a new vision of beauty, actual and spiritual." The truth of this observation is proved by *The Dawn Patrol*, by Paul Bewsher, the first and most considerable airman-poet. Miss Murray draws on 60 authors, including several American men and women. who have written poems on aviation or in anticipation of it, for other poems within the latter category drawing on Homer and Ovid and Tennyson. She has included Lady Sybil Grant's *Trial Flight*, but missed her finer poem *Above the Clouds* which appeared in The Poetry Review, January, 1921.

It is remarkable that Miss Murray has been unable to include any worthy poems commemorative of the achievement of airmen of immortal memory—the first to fly the Atlantic, to girdle the world, to reach the Poles. The younger poets who cry for new subjects as well as a new vocabulary while hugging their minor subjective themes are not inspired by the great occasion.

* * *

Anthologies with an original scheme and showing a wide range restrained by discrimination are increasing in number and will surely kill the promiscuous, imitative compilation of the hasty, unqualified bookmaker which the popularity of anthologies has brought into the market in recent years. E. M. Liddell's anthology of quiet verse, *The Coming of the Moon* (Burns and Oates, 6s. net), although containing less than one-third the matter in the two previously mentioned collections), is judicious and disarming, in spite of the too fanciful title. We dissected it at a reading of miscellaneous poems and found the scheme of quiet poems such

as one might read to a sleepless patient, conforming to sound rather than subject, adequately carried out without too much recourse to the more familiar anthologies. In a brief foreword Mr. Martin Armstrong revives the suggestion that as art has powerful physical and psychical effects on those who are sensitive to it—in fact, that is its function—it may in certain cases be more effective than physic as a tonic or a sedative. The range of its power "to minister to a mind diseased" is wider than that of any drug, and we may yet participate in an alliance between medicine and poetry which will extend enormously the demand for qualified, sympathetic readers and speakers of verse, with an extensive repertory of rhythmical poems, an idea that might be developed effectively.

* * *

Varia, a miscellany of verse and prose, compiled and annotated by Eleanor M. Brougham (Heinemann, 8s. 6d.), is another distinctive, individual, supplementary anthology, the harvest of extensive reading and rare culture. It is the kind of miscellany we all who love books would like to have the leisure and industry to compile. Miss Brougham's other anthology, *Corn from Olde Fieldes* (Bodley Head), contained the ungarnered grain of past centuries; her second gleaning is far wider, ranging from the fourteenth century to modern times, including extracts from the diary of Sir Ronald Storrs, "the last will and testament of a lunatic" (quoted by us fifteen years ago), poems by Yeats, Maurice Baring and other living writers. But the bulk of the oddments are from quaint and obscure sources, little prayers and little poems, and many quotations from letters of original character, in which Nell Gwynne, Perkin Warbeck, Queen Elizabeth, "Steenie," Sir John Suckling, and other famous personages reveal themselves.

* * *

An Anthology of Ancient Egyytian Poems has been added to the "Wisdom of the East" series (Murray, 3s. 6d. net). That it is a very small collection is due no doubt to there being no considerable volume of Egyptian poetry yet known to us, chiefly sacred hymns with a close resemblance to the Hebrew Psalms of a later day, and philosophical poems, exalted in theme, with a hope of continued work in other lives. We are told that rhyme is unknown in the Texts of the Pyramids, but rhythm was a marked feature of the poetic output of ancient Egypt, which was stately and austere in both religious and secular literature.

THE PREMIUM EDITOR'S REPORT.

I AM moved to plead for the rescue of our language from ignorant pedants. For some reason—perhaps it is their self-assurance—they continue to gain disciples; but surely POETRY REVIEWERS are not to be numbered among them? I was greatly pleased with a poem about Bluebeard, but was brought up by "His face as a death-mask." *Autumn Song* has "As a leaf, I flutter to the ground." Yet the writers don't mean these things: they want the word "*like*." There was an interesting balance of mistakes in Sir John Foster Fraser's article in *The Daily Express* yesterday. About ten lines after writing "I welcomed his shout *like* a green poet hails the cuckoo," he states that "*As* two children, we scrunched our feet through the heavily fallen leaves." Still, Sir John was not fussing round [not around or 'round] ignorantly picking holes like a writer in the *Radio Times* whose injunction always to say "commence" never "begin" sprawled over a whole page, and contained sentences beginning, for instance "We will perhaps....." "Shall" and "Should" seem to have been casualties of the Great War. So far as I can trace the matter, the incorrect use of "will" and "would" was first sponsored by two leaders of the Coalition Government. The Coalition is over, yet even to-day the London letter writer of *The Sunday Chronicle* can write "We will hear more of him." As to "commence," use it by all means, but with a noun as its object; we may even say "start," but followed by no verbal form other than the present participle.

Here is yet another "as" poem: "The years as lightning flashes fly," which of course is absurd. Here is another which speaks of "laying at the feet of God," a grotesque and blasphemous image. *Loss* spells "till" "'till"; why, the author only knows. *Night* contains the phrase "to you and I." *Langley Woods* speaks of "a nearby copse"; that is not English; why not "a copse near by." Here is a poem I need not name which nearly breaks its neck in trying to avoid a split infinitive. Will someone kindly explain to me what *is* all this rubbish about splitting infinitives? Why shouldn't we? There is no reason on earth. It simply happens that, generally speaking, the result is awkward. But when the result *isn't* awkward, when, on the contrary, *avoidance* is awkward, why *split* them, split them roundly—and welcome the consequences!

Then there is that wretched continental subjunctive: it is probably because of, rather than in spite of, the fact that scientists are pedantically finicking about their language that visitors to the recent

meeting of the British Association were informed " It is essential *that* applications *be made* in good time ! "

Is the bible good English ? I ask, because an hour or so ago I came across the sentences " None of these things come upon me " and " None of these things move me " ; I also found " none dieth to himself." Which is right ? Obviously both are right. The translator trusted his ear, and so should we—though that doesn't justify the broadcasters in saying " super*im*pose."

Finally, let us spell with some unanimity : when adding -ed to a work like symbol, please add an l as well. And don't miss the u out of labour, colour, humour, and the rest. We do not get these words direct from the Latin.

There ! I feel a lot better. After all, we cannot too often reiterate the necessities of the English poet's preparation and apprenticeship.

i. The love of England—not as one's native country, but just as England.
ii. The love and knowledge of English.
iii. The assiduous and long-continued reading of the great English poets [the " dead " ones of the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries].
iv. The cultivation of an ear.

These overlap, I know, but they are still a task not lightly to be faced. A correspondent, with whom I do not entirely agree, writes :

" Had I have known that the Editor of The Poetry Review was going to reply I should not have written because from experience from having seen a few numbers of The Poetry Review that he his not a Poet himself. I do not say that he does [not ?] know the rules of making poetry etec—but then any schoolboy knows that but the said schoolboy cannot write it—no more than 99 out of a hundred can. A poet cannot be made at school nor by a review nor by mixing with titled people. We must be born with the gift."

But, of course, being born with the gift is *not* sufficient in any case—whatever this " gift " may be. And our correspondent has perchance forgotten Ben Jonson's dictum " First, we require in our poet or maker a goodness of natural wit," or that other, that we require *exercitatio*, *imitatio* and *lectio* besides *ingenium*.

There can be no doubt that the analysis of great old works is of great help in the necessary training of the ear, and to this end almost any simple system of prosody is a good means. I do not think that any poet, *qua* poet, will get much assistance from Professor Sonnenschein's book, interesting as it is to the scientist. His cymograph [he spells it Kymograph, and no doubt measures the

charts with a MiKrosKope] measures exactly the duration of every syllable in any poem you may care to recite to it, but I cannot agree that "its operations promise to put at rest all the age-long controversies of the metrists" as one reviewer claims, because these measurements from a metrical point of view are worth exactly nothing. We can recognise simple ratios of duration by our ears, and it is precisely our ears that matter, our ears that must be pleased. No doubt in a song written in quite simple time there would also be rendered in practice, say, a couple of crotchets of dissimilar duration. These things are of no importance. [As another correspondent writes in a covering letter, "Should the poem not appeal to you in its present form, I can, of course, easily change it into a series of nicely rhymed couplets."] But, let me add, the book is exceedingly interesting and from that point of view well worth reading. Moreover, it is well printed and not ruinous to the eyes.

While talking about books, may I ask for support for the *Cahiers Rythme et Couleur* which are to appear twice yearly? The subscription is 15 fr. annually, to be sent to Miss Marion Allison, Studio Rythme et Couleur, Saint-Paul, A.-M., France. The first number is a most interesting record of what can be done by four serious artists. They are all disciples of Margaret Morris, and many of us who have visited the cousin institution at Chelsea know what that can mean. Miss Allison, of course, is one of our own bright particular stars, too, and I am delighted to read her contribution to this month's competition. Other prizewinners who thus preserve the worshipful fellowship are Miss Eleanor Simeon, Miss Joyce Harrison, Miss A. Doris L. Wilson, Miss Vera I. Arlett and Miss Nancy Pollok. The prize is awarded to Edith M. Walker (Bournemouth) for *Sanctuary*, which, if not flawless, is riotously poetic. Highly commended, with book prizes, are Mme. Helena Derezinska, Strasburg, Alsace (who doesn't deserve it, since her poem *The Key* was typed in red ink); Miss Morwyth Rees, Chislehurst; Miss S. Marguerite Goode (for *The Widow*), W. Croydon; Mr. W. Adams, Belfast; Rev. F. Keeling Scott, Swaffham (for *Swaffham Bells*); Mrs. May Folwell Hoisington, New York. Also highly commended, but without book prizes, are Gertrude Pitt, Henry Thorley, Judith Brundrett Tweedale, May Folwell Hoisington, Margaret B. Foote, Helen Ives Gilchrist, Winifred Davidson, Robert Crawford, Audrey Bell, Florence Overton, Gwendoline Goodwin, Hilda Hart and M. R. Cossins.

The poems of the following are commended: This is a high standard; further, as often happens, some contributors are below

their usual level of attainment: D. P. Lambert (of *Spring* fame), Alice E. Collinge, Katharine A. Munday, "Lettie Cole," W. Campbell Borrie, Florence Lederer, Laura Amsden Fowler, Diana Firth, John Cook, Hugh Fleming, Isabel C. Paxton, Dolly Scouloudi, Phyllis Hastings, "Editha Melbourne," "Scallop Shell," Margaret Winefride Simpson, P. Elsley, Frederick Kemp, H. T. Pitt and "Giles Carfax."

Of the essays in criticism I have tried to select:

(*a*) The best of those who recognised the author.
(*b*) The best of those who didn't.

Miss Nancy Pollock writes: "To criticise anything so delightful as William Morris's *Summer Dawn* seems something of an impertinence, but, despite its intrinsic beauty, there are certain flaws in the poem. As it is not technically a sonnet, it is too suggestive of the sonnet form. It is rich in delicacy of thought and phrasing, but the repetition of the words 'twixt' and 'betwixt' in the opening lines is both unmusical and unnecessary, while the false rhyming of 'corn' and 'dawn' is a fault usually found only in very amateurish work. The poem is full of artistic feeling and fine description of nature, and the climax is exquisite. *Summer Dawn* proves its greatness by the way in which it triumphs over its defects, until the reader forgets them in the beauty of the whole. Only great poets can afford to trifle with technique."

Miss Gertrude M. Marriage writes: "I believe this poem is written by one of the Irish poets, for there is the same deep emotion that is reduced to a simple form without losing the significance of inspiration. Though we receive a fair impression of the mysteriousness of dawn, this poet appears and really gives us a moving description of the emotions aroused in him by the sight of dawn when a note from the music of memory re-echoed across the lonely cornfields. The lines do not flow quite easily, and have a rather disjointed effect; but may not this be a manner of sustaining an emotion that is too broken and heartfelt for powerful expression? 'Wanes' in the third line would have been more effective than 'waneth,' which was used doubtless to avoid another sibilant. 'Heaven's gold waits and float through them along with the sun' is just a little clumsy; not only because of the prepositions 'along with,' but because 'heaven's gold' flows from the sun—and is the sun. 'The heavy elms wait . . . the uneasy wind rises' is a perfect picture of dawn's coming. The punctuation marks are rather numerous. Surely commas are not needed after 'morning light slips' and 'cloud-bars'? The final lines are a poig-

nant expression of prayerful suspense ; the repetition of the rhyme ' corn ' is the culmination of emotion. It is the musical voice of the Celtic soul that we hear."

I wish there were space to ask you to enjoy with me the pawky ribaldry of " Andrew " on the matter, but I have taken too much space already and I have still to tell you (next time) about some more " Fellowship " volumes.

For next time will critics please whet their swords on the *Star Threnody*, to be found on p. 301 of the last (September-October) issue.

* * *

The collection of poems and rhymes for children published by Mr. J. Compton, M.A., Inspector of Schools to the Manchester Education Committee, under the title of *Open Sesame* (Methuen, 2s.), has special interest and value. The compiler is a disciple of Matthew Arnold ; he has been in consultation with teachers ; he advocates the memorizing of poetry and recognises the immense importance of verse-speaking. His anthology is a delightful mixture of new and old, of quaint rhymes and jingles that have much sense in their nonsense, and Belloc's and Eleanor Farjeon's modern extravagances, with Edward Lear, Blake, Francis Thompson and many others, classical and otherwise, in between. The *Treasury of Verse*, selected by Magdalen G. Edgar and Eric Chilman (Harrap, 2s. 6d. net), is for older readers, and is built up on more conventional lines. But it is not a colourless copy of other collections—it has an individual interest and is distinctly pleasing and in good taste. Not the least attractive are the poems not found elsewhere, of which the late Sir C. A. Spring-Rice's *I Vow to Thee, My Country*, and Eric Chilman's *Beautiful Land* are excellent examples. But why is John Logan credited with *The Cuckoo*, which he stole from Michael Bruce ? These 350 cloth bound pages are indeed a " treasury " of poems of to-day and yesterday, admirably arranged.

* * *

The Principal of Lawnside School, Great Malvern, whose girls took part in the Tennyson essay competition, writes : " It is quite extraordinary how the *little* ones here respond to anything literary, and I was very pleased they had the opportunity of competing in such an interesting competition. *More than ever I feel that poetry and the study of it is one of the most essential parts of education. I should like to express my thanks to the Poetry Society for all it is doing to foster the love of poetry amongst children.*"

THE GREEK PLAY SOCIETY.

ONE of the early efforts of the Poetry Society was towards the presentation of Greek plays in a distinctive manner, with special regard to the chorus work. Some readers will remember the effect made by the presentation of the Hippolytus of Euripides in the marble hall of the University of London, when our attention to detail, and especially the successful speaking in unison of the chorus, pleased Prof. Gilbert Murray, who took a personal interest in the production. Hence it is with special interest we hear of the formation of a Greek Play Society, with Miss Sybil Thorndike on the Committee of Management, with the object of presenting translations of Greek Plays in London on Sunday evenings in a manner approximating as nearly as practicable to the original methods of production. It is felt that the time has come when the movement for the presentation of Elizabethan plays in the Elizabethan manner, set on foot by the Elizabethan Stage Society and further applied by The Phœnix to plays of the Restoration era, should be extended to the sublime works of the Greek dramatists. Mr. Bernard Shaw, voicing a growing body of opinion, has written that "every play should be performed as its author intended it to be performed." And while in certain respects (e.g., the disposition of the chorus) the limitations of modern theatres render this impossible where Greek plays are concerned, a great deal that has never been attempted in this country can be done to restore the original intention, so far as it is definitely known, of Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes. Never in the Greek theatre of the classic age do we find a direct imitation of nature—costumes, masks, elocution, movements, all were fantastic or conventional. For a god or a hero to appear with face exposed to view would have been regarded by the Greek playwrights, no less than by the Greek audience, as sacrilegious. The Greek Play Society will adopt masks, and another feature will be the employment, as in the Dionysian Theatre, of male actors only. Apart from the question of production, it may be pointed out that subscribers to the Greek Play Society will be given an opportunity of seeing many Greek plays that have not been produced in London within living memory. It is not, perhaps, generally realised that there are extant seven complete tragedies by Æschylus, seven by Sophocles, seventeen tragedies and one satyric drama by Euripides, and eleven comedies by Aristophanes—forty-three plays in all. The Greek Play Society proposes to present every year three of these plays in English translations. *Œdipus Tyrannus*, by Sophocles (in an English translation by Professor J. T. Sheppard), will be given on November 8th, at the Scala Theatre.

POETRY PROBLEM PAPERS: II.

As readers of THE POETRY REVIEW who do not indulge in verse-writing have some claim to consideration as well as the poets who are offered an increasing number of premiums, we are making a new departure, and are able to devote £5 (25 dollars) left over from a recent Sonnet competition and a number of books, including copies of Dr. Geraldine Hodgson's admirable *Criticism at a Venture* (10s. 6d.), which deals with poetic tendencies and appreciations, as prizes for the solution of "problems" in this and the previous issue.

The final paper of the present series is given below. Only 1 and 10 and any three of the other "problems" need be attempted. Answers should be received at the office of THE POETRY REVIEW, addressed "The Problems Editor," not later than December 12th. They will be considered in conjunction with last month's "problems" and the Browning cross-word examination, and the awards announced in the January issue. If sufficient interest is shown in these "poetry problems" to justify their continuance, a new series will begin in the January number. The key to the Browning cross-words is published below. The first solution came from a member of The Poetry Society in Antigua, who asks for a longer time for Overseas readers. We have taken this claim into consideration and will arrange to meet the wishes of distant competitors.

Poetry Problems and Exercises, 2 :—

1. Give a list of 12 *Poems of Eventide*, or 12 "Second-Best Poems" (see review of Mr. Lewis Hind's anthology), or 12 poems suitable for inclusion in a County Anthology (Devon, Cornwall, Yorkshire or Kent).

2. Quote what you consider the most musical passage (of two or three lines) in English poetry, with reasons for your selection.

3. Give a frank opinion in not more than 250 words of the poetical work of one of the following :—John Masefield, J. C. Squire, Gordon Bottomley.

4. Give, as concisely as possible, your own definition of poetry.

5. Indicate in order of merit the 12 best poems (in your opinion) in the Autumn Number of *Poetry of To-Day*.

6. What, in your opinion, is the best play written by a dramatist still living ? Give reasons to support your choice.

7. Give examples of, and discuss, one good and one bad onomatopoeic line you have noticed in your reading of poetry.

8. Make a practical suggestion for extending the influence and activity of the Poetry Society.

9. Give six quotations suitable for a Nature Calendar for November-December.

10. Select from among the volumes reviewed, advertised or otherwise mentioned in this issue (*a*) six books you would wish to add to your library; (*b*) the book you would give to (1) father, (2) brother, (3) sister, (4) maiden aunt, (5) sweetheart, (6 a) person who professes no interest whatever in poetry.

English teachers are asked to interest their pupils in these "poetry reading and research" papers. Questions for insertion in these problem pages will be welcomed and carefully considered.

* * *

KEY TO TORQUEMADA'S CROSS-WORD EXAMINATION ON THE WORKS OF ROBERT BROWNING.

HORIZONTAL.

1. FIFINE. *Fifine at the Fair:* XV.
5. HOTIS. *A Grammarian's Funeral:* I 129.
9. NUN. *Johannes Agricola in Meditation:* I 52.
10. RAT. *The Pied Piper of Hamelin:* IV, I 19.
11. PO. P(ollajol)o. *Old Pictures in Florence:* XXVII.
12. NTIT. Now that I, tying . . . . *The Laboratory:* I 1.
14. ISX. Anagram of *six. James Lee:* 3rd poem: "In the Doorway."
15. RB. Robert Browning. *A Light Woman:* XIV.
17. ET. E-yes . . . T-heir . . . *Sonnet.*
18. AMO. *Fra Lippo Lippi:* I 111.
19. RA. *Youth and Art:* XV.
21. ONCE. Once—lot. *Caliban upon Setebos:* I 156.
22. ANM. Anagram of Man. *Protus:* last line.
24. SL. S(au)l. *Saul.* I 3 et passim.
25. THRUSH. *Home-Thoughts, from Abroad:* II, I 6.
27. CG. Christ God, Count Gismond, Count Gauthier. *Count Gismond:* II, 1, 2, and 3.
28. ISTD. *The Last Ride Together:* I 1.
29. ONE. *Fra Lippo Lippi:* I 327.
30. SHELL. *In a Gondola:* X, I 54.
32. CRETE. *Balaustion's Adventure:* I 54.
34. ALT. *Old Pictures in Florence:* XXXV.
36. LOVE *One Way of Love. Another Way of Love.*
38. AS. *Through the Metidja to Abd-el-Kadr.*
39. SMELLS. *The Heretic's Tragedy:* IX, I 6.
41. LE. L(awrenc)e. *Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister:* V, I 8.
42. SIR. *Bishop Blougram's Apology:* I 14, and I 42 from end.

44. Rapt. *Waring:* VI, 1 32.
45. Pa. Aureolus Paracelsus. *Paracelsus:* Song in IV.
46. Alp. '*Transcendentalism*': 1 12.
47. Xi. *A Death in the Desert:* 1 6.
48. So. *An Epistle . . .*: last line.
49. Oby. Anagram of Boy. *A Death in the Desert:* 1 59.
50. Teop. Poet Reversed. *Popularity:* 1 1.
52. So. Don So-and-So. *Up at a Villa:* IX, 1 10.
53. Arn. Anagram of *ran*. *A Death in the Desert:* 1 57.
54. Nip. *Fra Lippo Lippi:* 1 10.
56. Niece. *Fra Lippo Lippi:* 1 196, and 1 6 from end.
57. Insect. *Another Way of Love:* III, 1 10.

VERTICAL.

2. In. *In a Gondola, In a Year, In Three Days.*
3. Fun. *Fra Lippo Lippi*: 1 66.
4. Intenser. *A Grammarian's Funeral:* 1 10.
6. Orson. *The Flight of the Duchess:* 1 6 from end.
7. Tax. *Up at a Villa:* X, 1 2.
8. It. "And nobody calls you dunce,
And people suppose me clever:
This could but have happened *once*
And we missed *it*, lost *it* for ever."
Youth and Art, XVII.
11. Portcullis. *The Flight of the Duchess:* VI, 1 40.
13. Itch. *An Epistle . . .*: 1 67.
14. Image. *A Grammarian's Funeral:* 1 69, and 1 13 from end.
16. Baldassaro. Baldassaro Galuppi. *A Toccata of Galuppi's:* I and IX.
20. Ah. *James Lee:* 1 1.
21. Ounces. *Caliban upon Setebos:* 1 157.
23. Millet. *In a Gondola:* VI, 1 3.
24. St. Stands for Saint, Saint Praxed. *The Bishop Orders his Tomb:* 1 60.
26. Ro. Ro(land). '*How they brought the Good News . . .*'
27. Che. *Bishop Blougram's Apology:* 1 20 and 1 45.
30. Sts. Plural of St. as this is repeated. *How it strikes a Contemporary:* 1 26 from end.
31. Lampions. *Respectability:* III, 1 7.
33. Early. *Porphyria's Lover:* 1 1.
35. Tl. T-he L-ord. *The Heretic's Tragedy:* 1 1.

37. Oe. *Confessions :* VII.
39. Saxe. *Master Hugues of Saxe-Gotha :* last line.
40. Lp. Lucy Percy, Countess of Carlisle. *Strafford :* Act I, 2.
43. Iabnc. Anagram of *cabin. Bishop Blougram's Apology :* 1 100.
49. Ore. *The Flight of the Duchess :* 11 21–26.
51. Pie. *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau, Saviour of Society :* 1 7.
53. Ai. *Artemis Prologizes :* 1 39.
55. Pc. P(orni)c. *Gold Hair :* 1 2.

* * *

The annual recital by holders of the Society's Silver Medal for distinction in verse-speaking, at which the Gold Medals of the Society will be awarded to those who satisfy the Examiner of their complete artistry of interpretation, will be given at the Spring Gardens Gallery, The Mall, on November 28th. All readers interested are invited to obtain tickets from the General Secretary.

* * *

Winter examinations in the art of speaking and reading verse will be held during November and December in London, Sheffield, Manchester, Bolton, Doncaster, Malvern, Arnside, Seascales, Kendal, Brighton, Southampton and Bournemouth. Applications for new examination centres, public or private, are invited. The winter examination at the University of London on December 5, the second of the present season, may be attended by readers interested in this important phase of the Society's work, which constitutes the most serious and valuable examinations of their kind. Admission permits must be obtained in advance from the General Offices of the Society, the examinations not being open public meetings. It is desirable, however, that members and others should be personally acquainted with them.

* * *

The Young People's Verse and Essay competitions are continued. In addition to the Lucchesi bust of Tennyson as a group prize, an unrestricted number of books are awarded at the discretion of the special adjudicator in acknowledgment of good work. For further particulars see pp. 361 and 283. MSS. for reference in our January issue should be received by December 1st. Last month Mr. W. F. Rawnsley personally visited Bedford Girls' High School and Felixstowe, Clifton Downs, and presented the Tennyson busts recently gained by these schools.

WILL-O'-THE-WISP

In the remote country parts in Sindh, when moonlight fails, peasants, servants, peons, etc., cross the dark field with "Tietz" lanterns to trace the paths to their villages and avoid snakes. The darkness hides the bearer of the lantern, only the flickering light wanders and skips about with weird, haunting aspect. The following poem portrays "Hassan," who, after a day's work, hurries home across the fields with his lantern. Now and again he stops, perhaps to chat with a friend he meets, then he goes round in a circle, or perhaps he caught sight of a snake, or has dropped something. His cottage is by the graveyard, and he is longing to drink the fresh goat's milk and devour newly baked "chapaties" (flat unleavened wheaten cakes)—his supper.—E. K.

WHAT is yon wandering light I see ?
Will-o'-the-Wisp in bush and tree . . .
Over the field it flits away ;
Further and further doth it stray ;
Dark is the night, no star doth gleam
Will-o'-the-Wisp
Bright as the love that woos a dream !—
Will-o'-the-Wisp . . .
Is it a spark from sun escaped ?
Is it a fraud in radiance draped,
Noose of a wizard's luring snare ?
Is it a sylph with golden hair ?
Is it a flaming memory,
Will-o'-the-Wisp in bush and tree ?

* * * * *

On to the lonely graveyard flies,
Will-o'-the-Wisp with beaming eyes . . .
There in a circle doth it prowl,
Is it a speculator's soul ?—
Now doth it cease its restive round,
Will-o'-the-Wisp
Is it a ghost to science bound ?
Will-o'-the-Wisp
'Tmay be a life bestowing breath,
Perched on the icy lips of death.
'Tmay be a seraph's guiding torch,
Fixed at the dark sepulchral porch,
Lighting the highways to the skies ;
Will-o'-the-Wisp with beaming eyes.

* * * * *

Vanished the light . . . dissolved the spell
Will-o'-the-Wisp ? . . . ah ! who can tell !
Fancy no more her web can weave ;
Gone is her twinking make-believe.
'Twas but a human kindled flame,
Will-o'-the-Wisp !—
Lit by a match to being came,
Will-o'-the-Wisp !—
Hassan at eve the field doth cross,
Lantern within his hand doth toss . . .
Wheaten " chapaties " haunt his thought,
Milk of the goat his fancy caught ;
Close by the graves his people dwell,—
Will-o'-the-Wisp ? . . . ah ! who can tell !

* * * * *

Khairpur Mirs. ELSA KAZI.

* * *

A Centre constituting the Poetry Society in Calcutta has been organised by Professor Jaygopal Banerjee, M.A., who has been associated with us as a member for many years and has now been able to carry out his long-cherished intention of forming a Centre of the Society in Calcutta. Sir Deva Prosad Sarbadhicary, M.A., LL.D., C.I.E., who took part in the inaugural meeting in the rooms of the Incorporated Law Society on August 15, has been elected president, with Mr. J. C. Dutt, M.A., vice-president, and Prof. Banerjee and Mr. A. C. Gupta, B.A., joint hon. secretaries. At the first ordinary meeting of the Centre on September 10 a paper was read on " Contemporary English Poets " and showed their importance to India and their significance in interpreting English thought, feeling and tendencies. (This survey has been published in the *Calcutta Review* for October.) It was reported that Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore had become associated with the Centre—an honour the Society, keenly aware of his distinguished services to poetry and the high esteem in which he is held throughout the English-reading world, greatly appreciates.

* * * *

On September 11, the members of the Hyderabad Centre of The Poetry Society met at the residence of Mr. Taunton, I.C.S. About fifty persons were present. Shams-ul-Ulema Mirza was voted to the chair. Mr. I. I. Kazi was allowed ten minutes to speak on modern English poets. He said it was impossible to do justice to the subject in that time, and related an account of a similar meeting he had been

present at in London. Mr. Mulchand Lalvani's song was well received. The English words were set to an Indain air. The recitation by Mrs. Kazi of one of her poems, " An Amil Wedding," was very much appreciated. She had apparently noticed a good deal of what had taken place at the ceremony. Two songs contributed by Mr. Bhownani were in Sindhi. The business part of the programme consisted of the appointment of Miss Ward, Mr. Ghulam Ali and Mr. Ramchand Manghamalani as joint secretaries. Mr. Jethmal Lavani sang or rather recited " Mitha Mahbub," without accompaniment, rendering the most beautiful musical poetry by a well-known Indian poet in such a way that it almost became singing. Our correspondent points out that " to sing " a poem in India almost always means " to recite " or chant it with vocal effects. Interest in the meetings of the Poetry Society in Sind is extending rapidly and our representatives are very much in request.

* * *

THE FIRST ZENANA COLLEGE CENTRE.

A very successful inaugural meeting constituting The Poetry Society (Incorporated) in the Deccan was held at the Zenana College, Nampalle, Hyderabad, Deccan, India, on September 28th. It was decided that the centre be known as " The Zenana College Centre," Hyderabad, Deccan, India. Miss A. E. M. Pope, M.A., L.R.A.M., A.R.C.M., M.R.A.S., Principal of the College, kindly consented to act as president of the centre and to provide accommodation for all the meetings. Everyone present evinced much interest in the aims and objects of the society, and a considerable number of the professors and students expressed the desire to become members. Many interesting suggestions were made with regard to the programme of the forthcoming meetings. It was decided that these should be devoted to the study of the works of individual poets and to the reading of poetic dramas, and that special attention should be paid to the art of reading and speaking verse. Ethel Rosenthal, F.R.G.S., A.R.C.M. (Ethel Rayson), Hon. Secretary, Zenana College Centre, Hyderabad, Deccan, India.

* * *

Dr. H. H. Hulbert, M.A., etc., is giving a course of lecture demonstrations on voice culture and its significance and importance, in London, Shortlands, and Bolton. Other provincial groups may link up with Bolton.

* * *

The Shortlands arrangements are :—November 10th and 24th, Julius Cæsar. December 8th, Christmas.

THE GAEKWAR OF BARODA AND ALDWORTH.

Mr. B. W. Horne, on behalf of H.H. the Gaekwar of Baroda, in acknowledging on behalf of His Highness the Society's expression of appreciation of his hospitality at Aldworth on July 11th, writes :— "On His Highness's return to England last month (Sept.) I told him of the visit of the Poetry Society to Aldworth, and he read a great number of the newspaper cuttings which had been mounted in a book for his use. There is no doubt that His Highness was extremely gratified at the way in which the Society responded to his invitation and expressed their appreciation of what he had done at Tennyson's home. He has been again at Aldworth, and I know he is most desirous of occupying it for a time, and I am now considering the question of completing the decoration of the house and furnishing it. I am sure your Society would be very pleased to see the house occupied."

* * *

The next meeting of the Poets' Fellowship (Northern Section) will be held at Manchester on November 28th, when Mr. Conrad Hartley will initiate a discussion on "The Function of Parody." The following meeting will probably be held in Bradford. The co-operation of members living in and near Bradford is solicited. Readers who desire invitations to these meetings should notify the General Secretary of The Poetry Society.

* * *

Capt. Cranmer Byng, of the General Council of The Poetry Society (Incorporated), is lecturing on behalf of the Society at Sheffield and Manchester in December. For the moment he has left his favourite subject of Chinese poetry, and will divert the glamour with which he invested "My Ancestors," to a new address on "Green Magic, introducing Professor Merlin and Master Puck," dealing with the beginnings of English poetry and the connection between poetry and magic.

* * *

Particulars of The Poetry Society's lectureships, designed to promote a reasoned sense of values and sound poetic taste, may be obtained by schools and other institutions and organisations able to arrange for a series of lectures from the General Secretary of the Poetry Society. Applications for the services of the Society's lecturers for the early part of 1926 should be made without delay, and also inquiries respecting Spring Examinations in Verse-Speaking in schools and provincial centres.

Miss Minnie Aumonier, author of the booklet, *Gardens in Sun and Shade*—now in its fifth edition—has published *The Poetry of Gardens Calendar* for 1926. Prettily designed, with appropriate weekly quotations by Miss Aumonier, this calendar will please imaginative lovers of gardens, in which, as in poetry, they find solace and healing.

* * *

Mr. Henry Meade Bland of the University of California has formed a California Chapter of The Poetry Society, some particulars of which will be published in the next issue of this Gazette. A representative of the earlier founded Colorado Chapter, Mrs. Clyde Robertson, represented the Chapter at the Aldworth meeting. Virginia, Texas, New York, Boston have formed Chapters of the Society recently. A Headquarters' representative is in Canada with a view to forming a Canadian Chapter in co-operation with Mrs. Marion Osborne, our Canadian representative.

* * *

Miss S. Watt, who through an accident was unable to take the Kensington meeting on October 15th, when Miss Julie Huntsman kindly filled the breach and gave a recital, has been transferred to the December 10th meeting at 27, Campden House Court, W.8.

* * *

The Barnet Centre meetings are :—

November 13th : A Reading of Aristophanes's *Birds* arranged by Mrs. Lancelot Speed.

„ 27th : Keats' *Endymion*, arranged by Mrs. Lattimer.

December 11th : Lecture by Miss Alys Buckton, author of *Eager Heart*, with readings from her own poems.

* * *

Kensington Centre members are requested to forward their subscriptions when due to the General Secretary at 16, Featherstone Buildings. This will relieve the Centre Secretary of considerable clerical labour.

* * *

The *Poetry Revue* arranged by Miss Bagley will be presented at the Connaught Hall, Regent Street, W., on December 3rd and 8th. Assistance is required in promoting the financial success of what will be a very attractive entertainment. Details and tickets may be obtained from the General Secretary at 16, Featherstone Buildings, W.C.1.

The following programme of readings has been arranged by the Golders Green Centre :—

November	6th.	Longfellow's *Spanish Student.*
,,	20th.	Wanderlust.
December	4th.	Thomas Hardy.
,,	18th.	Dramatic Readings.
January	8th.	Childhood and Youth.

The meetings are held at Woodstock School, Golders Green Road (few minutes from Tube station and on 'bus route), on the first and third Fridays of the month at 8 p.m. (excepting in January, 1926, when the meetings will be on the second and fourth Fridays). Full particulars of the work of the Centre can be obtained of the Hon. Sec., 32, Camden Square, N.W.1.

* * *

A very pleasant evening was spent on September 26th, when the annual "At Home" of the Hampstead Centre was held at 150, Finchley Road (by the kind courtesy of Miss Julie Huntsman). There was a large attendance of members and friends. The following programme of readings has been arranged :—

November	3rd.	Witches and Warlocks.
,,	17th.	Sussex and Devon.
December	1st.	Euripides' *Alcestis.*
,,	15th.	Wings.
January	5th.	John Keats, including *Eve of St. Agnes.*

The meetings are held at 150, Finchley Road, N.W.3, at 7.45 p.m., and further particulars can be obtained of the Hon. Sec., Mr. J. F. Tilly, 32, Camden Square, N.W.1.

* * *

Members of The Poetry Society (and postal subscribers to The Poetry Review) are asked to remit outstanding subscriptions or to renew for 1926 without further notice. Attention to this little detail would greatly facilitate the work of the General Secretary. The annual subscription is actually so very small and has to cover so many things and so much work—on economic grounds it should be at least double the present amount—that it should not be necessary for several reminders to be sent before payment is made. New members and subscribers for 1926 would be welcomed.

* * *

Title page and Index of Vol. XVI, now concluded, will be published with the January 1926 issue—the first number of Vol. XVII.